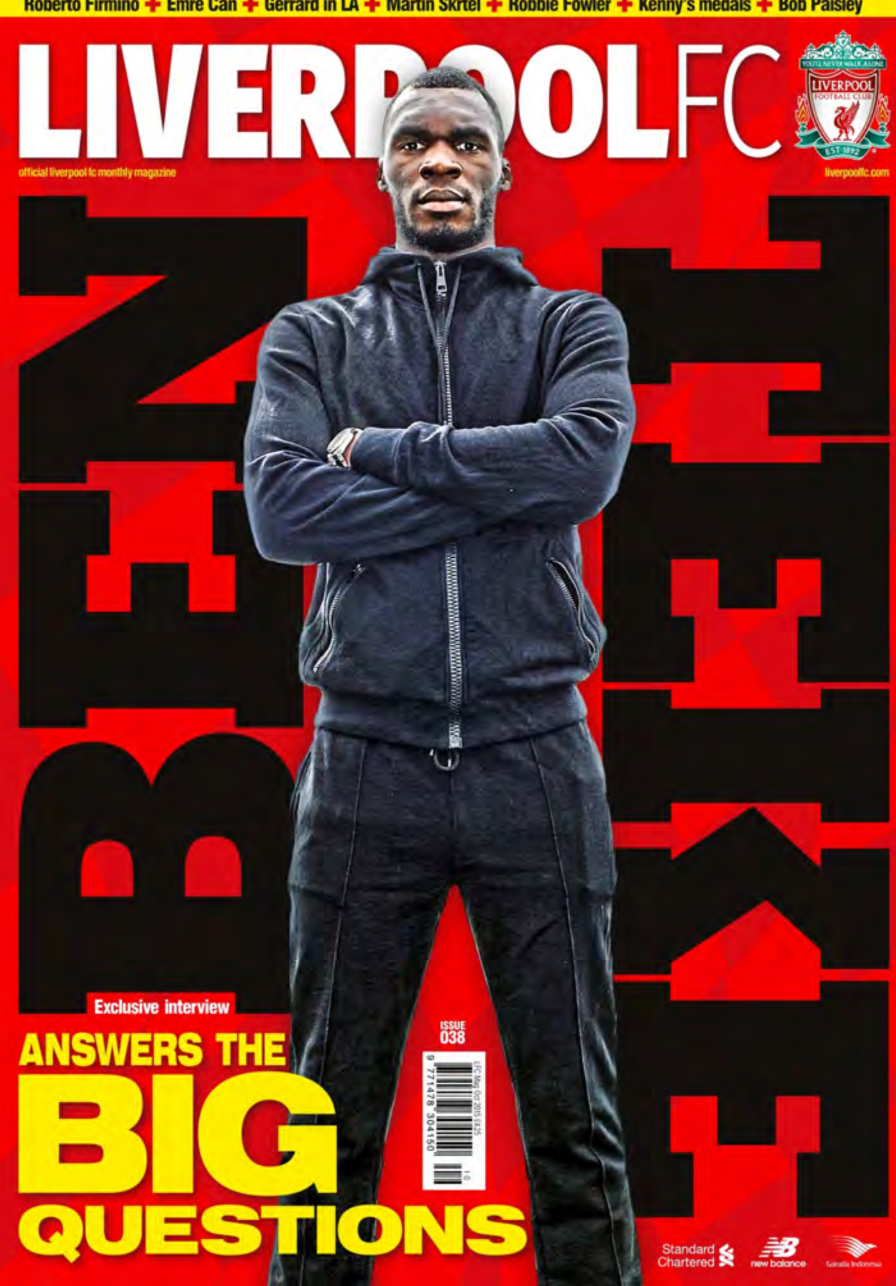


Roberto Firmino + Emre Can + Gerrard in LA + Martin Skrtel + Robbie Fowler + Kenny's medals + Bob Paisley
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BENTEKE
Exclusive interview
ANSWERS THE
BIG
QUESTIONS
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FOOTBALL

Exclusive interviews with current Reds stars, legends and members of the Ladies team, plus tales from the club's illustrious past.

CLUB

How the football club reaches out to communities at home and abroad, plus news from the stadium, official stores and media.

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A new front section exploring the wider LFC world and keeping fans up-to-date with what's happening and what's about to

Here's a detail from a fantastic mural created by local artist Alan Murray for the newly-opened Shankly Hotel in Liverpool's city-centre. Can't identify the breed of pooch? Then how about telling us the **year** that Shanks signed Ray Clemence for LFC and from which **club**? Answer on p91

BIGGER BRIGHTER BETTER

Plans revealed for Anfield's green and pleasant land



More green landscaping, colours which reflect the stadium's traditional architecture, and a floor pattern resembling a football scarf… These are some of proposals included in Liverpool FC's latest planning application for the Main Stand redevelopment project.

The application doesn't alter the current scheme approved in September 2014 (adding around 8,500 seats and increasing the overall capacity of Anfield to 54,000) but seeks approval for the detailed design of the public-realm area which has evolved since work began onsite. The expanded Main Stand will open onto a wide space which will reconnect the stadium and Stanley Park while creating a vibrant area to be enjoyed by fans and the local community, particularly on non-matchdays.

The project remains on target for completion during 2016/17, with the redeveloped stand comprising three tiers and the existing lower tier re-profiled with a widened player tunnel, new team benches, media platform and wheelchair positions.

AROUND TOWN

Random Reds-related stuff in the centre of the city of Liverpool









5

1 Ablett House
A new student block in Liverpool has been named after the late Gary Ablett, the defender who won two league titles and an FA Cup with the Reds before moving 'across the park' to neighbours Everton.

2 Handball!
In the window of a pub, sporting a fab mop-top and making no attempt to control the ball legitimately, is George Harrison. In the interests of fairness fellow Beatle Paul is just out of picture in Everton blue.

3 Take it as Red
The shelves of Liverpool's Central Library are (quite literally) groaning with LFC books – well, the football section anyway. When you join you also get a choice of library card in red or blue.

4 Shop talk
Skrtel and Mignolet gaze out from the stylish official club store in Liverpool ONE – one of seven such venues along with Williamson Square, Anfield Stadium, Birkenhead, Chester, Belfast and Dublin.

5 Stevie's wall
Taking pride of place in the foyer of the *Liverpool Echo* offices is the spectacular Steven Gerrard Memory Wall – measuring 8m x 4m and made by a team of artists from thousands of messages from fans.

WINGING IT

Liverbirds around Liverpool #2. This gloriously gilded bird is the centrepiece of the gates to the city's old Sailors Home. Over 15ft high and dating from the 1840s, they've been fully restored and now stand at the entrance to Liverpool ONE and near to LFC's official club store in the swish shopping complex.



WIN A NEW MOTD BOOK!

We've got three copies of the new *Match of the Day 365* book to give away. Written by one of the show's leading commentators, Steve Wilson, and published by BBC Books, it's a day-by-day collection of the best Premier League-era goals, matches and memories – with loads of Liverpool FC content. For a chance to win a copy, just send your name, address and contact number to **liverpoolfcmag @trinitymirror.com** and put **MOTD BOOK** in the title bar. We'll pick the winners at random and announce them in the next issue. **Closing date:** Friday 25 September 2015.

LFC Goals Book winners:
David Curry, Mossley Hill; Robert Parker, Grantham; Russell Broomhall, Burntwood.

Paul Walsh book winners:
Andrea Dando, Bootle; John-Paul Tooley, London W5; Ed Cross, Co Kildare; Kathy Hagna, Anfield, Emma English, Bristol.



Missing Liverpool



LFCTV heads for the sun for a special Steven feature...
Steven Gerrard joins guest presenter Jo Ankier in a stroll around the Venice Beach boardwalk in an episode of #LFCWORLD to chat candidly about his adventure across the Pond.

Calling in on famous Santa Monica locations like Muscle Beach and the basketball courts where NBA stars have honed their skills, Steven opens up about life with LA Galaxy, settling in on America's West Coast, negotiating the crazy traffic, using the 'S' word (soccer), and supporting the Reds from afar this season.

LFCTV is available on Sky channel 429 and Virgin Media channel 544. Don't miss its brand new shows from new-look studios, with exclusive behind-the-scenes access, every kick of every game and live news from Melwood, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Loving Los Angeles



Scouse house

In a celebrated Anfield landmark some of Liverpool FC's staunchest fans assemble



Howard Gayle, Echo writer James Pearce and David Fairclough

Meet just a few members of the Merseyside branch of the Liverpool Football Club Official Supporters Club – and see if you can also recognise a couple of familiar faces among them too.

The photo on the left was taken at the historic Sandon pub, a couple of blocks away from the stadium at Anfield and the spiritual birthplace of LFC. The branch regularly meets here on either the first or second Monday evening of the month, and most recently it welcomed former Reds players Howard Gayle and David Fairclough as guest speakers plus the *Liverpool Echo* Reds correspondent James Pierce (all to the left in the picture). Also present was Christine Mounsey from the club to talk about Liverpool FC Foundation's work in men's health and well-being, while a minute's applause was held for former player Brian Hall, who was key to the foundation of the branch back in 1993.

Among its many roles the branch organises social and fundraising events while seeking to uphold and enhance the good name of Liverpool Football Club and its supporters. Through this connection it has also established friendly links with Reds throughout the world and has close ties with the Borussia Moenchengladbach Fan Projeckt.

In the last couple of years the branch has organised memorable 50th anniversary reunions for Liverpool FC's 1964 league champions and 1965 FA Cup winners, with both events taking place inside Anfield's Centenary Stand and packed with former players and other famous faces.

The current branch president is

The branch meets at the Sandon – local pub and LFC's spiritual birthplace

ex-skipper Phil Thompson, with vice-presidents Jamie Redknapp (recipient of the branch's first player-of-the-year award), Sammy Lee, Alan Kennedy, David Fairclough, Tommy Smith and club statistician Dave Ball. Former Boot Room boy Ronnie Moran is honorary life president, and there are 96 honorary members of the branch, all of whom were lost at Hillsborough.

New members are always welcome on the night. You can find out more at **www.lfcmerseyside.co.uk** and follow the branch on Twitter **@LFCMERSEYSIDE.**



Branch chairman Les Lawson asks the panel a question

LIVERPOOL FC Instagram

@Mamadousakho3
New season and 200% of motivation! #YNWA #doyourbest #Liverpool #LFC



@roberto_firmino
Next cover of @liverpoolfc magazine! Próxima capa revista do Liverpool #LFC #YNWA #vamoqvamo



@phil.coutinho
thanks @uber_board



@jordon_ibe
Little banter... @nathaniel_clyne #LFC

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE



How our Ladies are helping to break boundaries and shatter ceilings through a fab new campaign

Liverpool FC's main sponsor Standard Chartered have teamed up with Liverpool Ladies FC to launch the #ThisGirlsGoal campaign, which is designed to create and facilitate a conversation about the challenges faced by adolescent girls around the world.

Ladies stars Asisat Oshoala, Natasha Dowie, Gemma Bonner and Fara Williams took part in a photo-shoot at the cutting-edge Camp & Furnace in Liverpool's creative and digital quarter – a refreshingly modern venue





for a campaign which aims to to identify existing negative stereotypes and smash them, replacing them with empowering and inspirational messages instead.

Payal Dalal, head of education and girls programmes at Standard Chartered, says: "Around the world girls aren't given the opportunities they deserve: they are denied education, employment and equality. What better way to highlight these issues than with the powerful and inspirational Liverpool Ladies FC players. We hope that by working together we can help to give a voice to girls around the world, and smash those negative stereotypes."

Follow **@GoalGirlsGlobal** on Twitter to find out more about the campaign and show your support.






LIVERPOOL FOOTBALL CLUB
PRESTON
NORTH END
LIVERPOOL
RED ARMY
THIS IS
ANFIELD

BILL'S



The doors of the all-new Shankly Hotel are open. Prepare to be dazzled

Ideas run in the Shankly family. Indeed, Bill Shankly had perhaps the most famous idea in Liverpool Football Club's entire history.

"My idea was to build Liverpool into a bastion of invincibility. Napoleon had that idea and he conquered the bloody world. And that's what I wanted: for Liverpool to be untouchable. My idea was to build Liverpool up and up and up until eventually everyone would have to submit. Give in."

The Reds didn't quite conquer the world – only Europe, five times – but he revolutionised Liverpool FC from a giant catching 40 winks into one that has captured over 40 pieces of silver since he walked through the Anfield door in 1959.

Now, thanks to an idea by Bill's grandson Chris Carline, you can walk through the doors of the newly opened Shankly Hotel in Liverpool city-centre. Situated at Millennium House on Victoria Street, the 83-bedroom joint-venture between Signature Living and the Shankly Family is a luxury hotel that is not only the hottest new place in town for Kopites to stay but features a Shankly Museum containing a stunning array of memorabilia.

And it was all the idea of season-ticket holding Chris. "Two-and-a-half years ago I was introduced to Lawrence Kenwright of Signature Living, who have other hotels in the city, and I pitched the idea to him. He loved the concept and we went from there. We had a vision for how we wanted the Shankly Hotel to look and feel and then found the right building. The purchase and planning process took the bulk of the time and then in March [2015] we eventually got the keys. To get it completely fitted out, opened and functioning in less than six months took some doing! But we're proud of how it looks."

The photos and words on these pages can't truly do the Shankly Hotel justice. It's one of those mesmerising places that you as a Liverpool fan – whether old enough to have watched Shanks' teams at Anfield in the flesh or born long after he passed away in

PLACE

1981 – should see with your own eyes.

Every one of the themed bedrooms features a quote about Shankly, many of them supplied by Liverpool supporters recalling their memories of the great man. But the Shankly Hotel is so much more than simply a bed for a night. It's a museum – to which access is free – like none other in the world.

Walking into a hotel lobby that has the original key to the Shankly Gates and a scarf thrown to Shanks by the Kop, both buried in glass cases on the floor, is rather special. Glance to your right and you'll spot the original contract he signed to become Liverpool FC manager and the typewriter – an Olivetti lettera 32, no less – he would use to personally write replies to supporters who had contacted him.

And then, in the aptly named Bastion Bar & Restaurant, you'll discover so much memorabilia – including his medals as a player and manager, shirts and tracksuits and the *This Is Your Life* book handed to him by Eamonn Andrews in 1973 – that you may be tempted to use the breakfast table condiments to talk tactics as Shankly famously did in one iconic image.

"Where else can you have your breakfast sat next to Bill Shankly's medals while watching a rerun of the 1974 FA Cup final?" laughs Chris. "Whether you want to stay here, maybe come for a bite to eat, have a drink watching a Liverpool match, or simply walk through the doors to see the memorabilia, then everyone is welcome.

"It wouldn't be the Shankly Hotel, or represent my granddad's socialist ethos, if it wasn't set up like this, and a big thing for us is to keep his legacy alive to a new generation of fans. We've had people come in for a drink and like what they've seen so much that they've booked to stay here, and fans from all over the world are coming to stay.

"Liverpool's first game after we opened was the 1-0 win against Bournemouth and Alan Kennedy popped in to meet fans before they headed up to Anfield. We've even had Liverpool fans come in who have felt so emotional at seeing the pictures and the memorabilia that they've cried which, in a strange way, was nice as it showed the strength of feeling people still have for him."

With images and quotes from Shankly beamed onto a wall in reception, a stunning mural painted by local artist Alan Murray greeting

FAR OUT

Chris reveals: "Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, was tracing his family tree and somewhere along the line he found a connection to Liverpool. He came over to the city when my grandad was Liverpool manager and the club received him as a guest. He attended a match at Anfield and afterwards he met my grandad. As a token of thanks for inviting him to the game he presented him with this set of framed Apollo mission badges from the NASA space programme. It was an unbelievable thing for us to find and a piece of Shankly memorabilia I'm not sure if many Liverpool fans have been aware of before."




A bust of the main man

guests as they step out of the lifts, and the walls and ceilings covered with photos, telegrams (including one from The Beatles), letters and Bill's old 'On The Ball' columns, you can immerse yourself in all things Shankly for hours.

There's also a poignant Hillsborough tribute in the form of 96 candles, each individually named and unveiled by members of the Hillsborough Family Support Group including Margaret Aspinall and Jenni Hicks alongside Andy Burnham MP.

Not only has Chris overseen the development of a stylish hotel but he's also ensured that previously-unseen Shankly memorabilia is on show for football fans to enjoy. "When Nessie, my nan, passed away 13 years ago we had to clear the house and inside it we found about 90 per cent of the memorabilia on display here. My nan had hoarded everything. She'd even kept a razor with a bit of his hair in it! Thanks to her it has allowed us to create the museum and I'm made-up that we've got so much of it on display in the hotel. It's a part of football history that should be available for people to see."

And now it is. Which goes to show that ideas don't just run in the Shankly family – they become reality.

■ To book a room visit **www.shanklyhotel.com.** You can also follow **@ShanklyHotel** on Twitter.





The scarf thrown from the Kop


Key to the Shankly Gates!

SHANKLYVISION

1. "Well the Kop's exclusive. The Spion Kop at Liverpool's an institution, and if you're a member of the Kop you feel as if you're a member of a big society where you've got thousands of friends all round about you. And they're united. And loyal."

2. "Since I came here to Liverpool – to Anfield – I have drummed it into our players, time and again, that they are privileged to play for you. And if they didn't believe me, they believe me now."

3. "I would like to win the European Cup, naturally, because that's the ultimate in Europe. But the main thing, and our bread and butter, is this… *[Points left. Cut to League championship trophy as camera pans up from its base, past red ribbons to gleaming figure at top]*. And that's what we want to win all the time. Never mind Europe. I'm glad we're in Europe. It's been a great thing for Liverpool, great thing for the country. But this is our bread and butter. And this is the one that we want."

4. "'Retirement' is the stupidest word I've ever heard in all my life. There you are. Nobody can retire… What a word, eh? Stricken from the record, 'retirement'… I haven't retired, no. Retired from Anfield, yes. Retired from football and from life, no."





words: Chris McLoughlin

Louis Berry is the LFC-supporting performer whom they're all tipping for stardom

DREAMS & SONGS TO SING

Those in the know say that local musician and Liverpool FC fan Louis Berry is going to be big – very big. Some industry experts have even compared the 24-year-old's voice and style to that of Jerry Lee Lewis and Bob Dylan.

Such hype seems a long way from what he calls a normal upbringing in Kirkby. "I'm an only child and grew up roughly a mile away from where the LFC Academy is now," he explains. And, at least initially, it was football that occupied his time. "I played every day, I played at school, I played on Sunday mornings; as much as possible really. I loved it. I was a left winger even though I'm right-footed. I used to try to cut in and score long-range goals like Philippe Coutinho regularly does now!"

Becoming a Red was "the only option – my family are all Reds and my grandad in particular. You are born into that. You just don't have a choice."

It was his grandad Jimmy who would also help to ignite his other big passion: music. "He played the guitar. I wasn't allowed to touch it in case I broke it. But when he wasn't looking I'd sneak it away and try to teach myself a few chords. I'd try to impress him then by playing what I'd learned. His attitude was: everybody plays the guitar. So he bought me a banjo instead."

Then came a series of chance occurrences leading to a publishing deal within hours of playing a 'BBC Introducing' gig. "Around the age of 16 my obsession with football started to wane a little. Like a lot of lads I started going out more. Through that I met some people who were big into music. One of them wrote his own



Liverpool FC's UEFA Europa League campaign begins on Thursday 17 September so we've taken a journey back to eight far-flung places that travelling Kopites have previously visited in the competition...

WROCLAW 1975: despite the Polish pitch resembling an ice-rink and temperatures of minus 15 the game went ahead and Liverpool won 2-1 playing in special French boots that helped them to stand up better! It was so slippy that coach Joe Fagan's tactical advice was "kick the ball in the way you're facing as long as it's not your own net," while boss Bob Paisley later described it as "probably the most difficult game we've ever played in Europe." Ray Kennedy and John Toshack got the goals.

LAHTI 1991: the Finnish city – better known as the venue for the 1989 World Ski-jump Championships – hosted the Reds' first European away match in the post-Heysel era. In front of 8,800 fans in the Lahden Stadion, with a band playing throughout, Graeme Souness' injury-hit side lost 1-0 to Finnish part-timers Kuusysi.
A 6-1 first leg win spared the blushes.

VLADIKAVKAZ 1995: less than 50 travelling Kopites made the trip – being 50 miles from war-torn Chechnya wasn't the greatest of selling points – but those inside the Spartak Stadium saw the Russian league leaders beaten 2-1 in Roy Evans' first Euro match as manager thanks to goals from Steve McManaman and a spectacular 30-yarder from Jamie Redknapp.



songs and, being competitive, I thought: I can to that too. I went away and scribbled a few down.

"A while later a few of us were in a pub in Liverpool called The Pilgrim. We'd just gone in for a drink, not aware that there was an open-mic session on. One of my mates suggested I should sing some of the stuff I'd written. I refused but they goaded me in to it."

Afterwards, one observer came forward to talk about his performance. "The girl said she knew a guy, Jon Withnall, who had been a producer for some of the Coldplay albums and it might be worth meeting him."

Initially it didn't go well. "He didn't like the stuff I played at first. Then I played something slightly different – almost rock-and-roll style – and he thought it was good and asked if I had more like that. We got in the studio and recorded a few songs. I got some demos done that then led to a band and management. My first proper gig was in The Cavern and I signed a publishing deal after that. Then I did a second gig at the Arts Centre in Liverpool and I got a record deal from it."

Currently recording at Parr Street Studios in Liverpool city-centre – Coldplay, Paolo Nutini and The Coral are among the list of

"As a kid I used to try to cut in and score long-range goals like Coutinho"

famous names to have worked there – Berry is intent on turning his potential into long-lasting success. "When I wake up in the morning I tell myself: I'm going to be the biggest male artist on the planet. That is my attitude. I'd imagine guys like Jamie Carragher, Steven Gerrard and Robbie Fowler – heroes of mine – were all the same. They didn't just hope they'd be good players, they made it happen. I want to make things happen for me and I think that mindset can take you very far."

■ Louis is out playing live around the country with his band. For further info and tour dates visit www.louisberryofficial.com and follow him on Twitter @LouisBerryOffic.



KOSICE, 1998: the Slovak champions were beaten 3-0 with the Reds starting like a train in the Lokomotiva Stadium, going two up through Berger and Riedle in 23 minutes. Michael Owen netted the third after Robbie Fowler set him up after coming on as sub.

LIBEREC, 2000: known as the 'Manchester of Bohemia' because of its historic textile associations, the Czech town went down a storm with travelling Kopites, not least because it cost 22p for a pint. How much they recall of the 3-2 win (Barmby, Heskey, Owen) in Stadion u Nisy is debatable!

LJUBLJANA, 2003: Olimpija Ljubljana almost had as many Js as a journeyman jujitsu jester *[get a grip–Ed]* and the Slovenian side took a shock lead against Gerard Houllier's men. Michael Owen secured a 1-1 draw with his 21st goal in Europe, one more than previous record holder Ian Rush. He must've been jubilantly jumping for joy…

RABOTNICKI (SKOPJE), 2010: Roy Hodgson's brief era as Liverpool boss began in Macedonia with a routine victory in which the hosts were beaten by a David Ngog double. It was a decent result given the match was played on a bumpy pitch in the balmy Balkans heat with 10 first-teamers missing, and not even a partial floodlight failure 15 minutes from time, after someone forgot to put 50 denar in the meter, could stop the Reds.

GOMEL, 2012: after winning his first game as manager 1-0, Brendan Rodgers sent a thank-you letter to the intrepid Reds who had made the trip to Belarus. With a visa costing up to $325, flights from Manchester going via Frankfurt to Minsk before a five-hour train journey to Gomel and hotel accommodation only bookable if you had an invitation letter, there have been easier places to get to than the Central Stadion. But then Liverpool supporters always find a way.

Tweets of the month

Bentekechristian
@bentekechris20
Always nice to start with a win and a goal looking forward to the season thank you for your welcome :) #YNWA

Gary Lineker
@GaryLineker
Contrary to the thoughts of some, I think Benteke will score a lot of goals for Liverpool and prove to be an excellent signing.

Joe Gomez
@J_Gomez97
Quality result and clean sheet away at Stoke, great experience for me making my debut... Great support from travelling fans as well #LFC

Caroline Wozniacki
@CaroWozniacki
Come on @LFC! #firstgameoftheseason #GoReds



Linda Pizzuti Henry
@Linda_Pizzuti
Another win, another clean sheet for @LFC! Exciting match, credit to supporters of both teams for great atmosphere

Shankly Hotel
@ShanklyHotel
So proud and honoured that @HFSG_Official visited the hotel yesterday to see our memorial to the 96. #JFT96

5times
@5timesco
NEW PODCAST: @MCATEER4 is joined by @LuchoGarcia14 reviewing the opening game v Stoke #LFC

Robbie Fowler
@Robbie9Fowler
Always worth a listen to see if @MACTEER4 says anything he regrets and we all love… #Dave



WHAT'S

TEATIME TREAT

Following the international break Liverpool return to action with a trip to Old Trafford. Although Brendan Rodgers' men lost this fixture 3-0 last season, the game saw the manager introduce a three-at-the-back system which helped kick-start the Reds' season. Louis van Gaal's charges, meanwhile, will be aiming for a repeat of last season's double. The Saturday 12 September game has a tea-time kick-off (5.30pm).

VILLA THRILLER

Liverpool's new no9 Christian Benteke will have an early opportunity to renew old acquaintances when Aston Villa visit Anfield at the end of the month. The big Belgian will be hoping to come up against his former team-mates when the Reds host Tm Sherwood's side on Saturday 26 September. Benteke scored five goals for Villa in six matches against Liverpool during his spell with the Birmingham club. In the month's other Premier League game the Reds entertain newly promoted Norwich City on Sunday 20.



LADIES DECIDERS

Liverpool Ladies will have a key say in the destination of the FA Women's Super League title during September. While Matt Beard's side may have given themselves too much to do to win it for a third successive season, they host both Arsenal and Chelsea at the Select Security Stadium in Widnes at either end of the month. Between times they also make the short trip to Manchester City.

ON: SEPT





GET IN THE SWING

Ever dreamt of shooting the breeze with an ex-Liverpool star over a leisurely round of golf?

The organisation 5times, which represents the club's Former Players Association, have teed up the Liverpool Legends annual golf day for Thursday 24 September at Cardin Park near Chester. The day will offer championship golf at the stunning Nicklaus course, an evening of top-class entertainment with a comedian and support from The Military Band.

The event will be a fantastic way to mix with former footballing heroes, while raising much-needed funds for local charities. This year's event will support The OppO Foundation, a charity which has been established to help ex-military personnel, their families and dependants on their return to civilian life.

Gold, silver and bronze packages are available for three people to join an ex-Liverpool FC star in a four-ball before attending a gala dinner in the evening. Sponsorship packages are also available.

To purchase a package or discuss your individual needs, contact Sue Griffiths on **07975 597 219 or sue@5times.co.uk** or Jim Donaldson on **07855 968 861 or jim.donaldson@5times.co.uk.**

Birthdays and anniversaries

Adam Bogdan 28 on 27 Sept
Scott Carson 30 on 3 Sept
Markus Babbel 43 on 8 Sept
John Arne Riise 35 on 24 Sept
Stephane Henchoz 41 on 7 Sept
Luis Alberto 23 on 28 Sept
Ronnie Whelan 54 on 25 Sept
Kevin Lewis will be 75 on 19 Sept
David Thompson 38 on 12 Sept
John Aldridge 57 on 18 Sept
Alun Evans 66 on 30 Sept
Daniel Sturridge 26 on 1 Sep

26 years ago since the Reds beat Crystal Palace 9-0 on 12 September.
34 years since Ian Rush scored his first goal for LFC on 30 September – against Finnish side Oulun Palloseura.
37 years since that famous 7-0 win over Tottenham at Anfield on 2 September.
41 years since the club's record victory – 11-0 v Stromsgodset on 17 September.
51 years since the Reds defeated KR Rejkyavik in their first-ever European tie at Anfield on 14 September.



FIXTURE LIST 2015/2016

AUGUST

Sun 9	Stoke City (A, 4pm, Sky)	1-0
Mon 17	Bournemouth (H, 8pm, Sky)	1-0
Mon 24	Arsenal (A, 8pm, Sky)	0-0
Sat 29	West Ham United (H, 3pm)	

SEPTEMBER

Sat 12	Manchester United (A, 5.30pm, Sky)
Thu 17	UEFA Europa League Matchday 1
Sun 20	Norwich City (H, 4pm)
22 or 23	Carlisle United (Capital One Cup 3)
Sat 26	Aston Villa (H, 3pm)

OCTOBER

Thu 1	UEFA Europa League Matchday 2
Sat 3	Everton (A, 3pm)
Sat 17	Tottenham Hotspur (A, 3pm)
Thu 22	UEFA Europa League Matchday 3
Sat 24	Southampton (H, 3pm)
Wed 28	Capital One Cup 4
Sat 31	Chelsea (A, 3pm)

NOVEMBER

Thu 5	UEFA Europa League Matchday 4
Sat 7	Crystal Palace (H, 3pm)
Sat 21	Manchester City (A, 3pm)
Thu 26	UEFA Europa League Matchday 5
Sat 28	Swansea City (H, 3pm)

DECEMBER

Wed 2	Capital One Cup 5
Sat 5	Newcastle United (A, 3pm)
Thu 10	UEFA Europa League Matchday 6
Sat 12	West Brom Albion (H, 3pm)
Sat 19	Watford (A, 3pm)
Sat 26	Leicester City (H, 3pm)
Mon 28	Sunderland (A, 3pm)

JANUARY

Sat 2	West Ham United (A, 3pm)
Wed 6	Capital One Cup S-F 1
Sat 9	Emirates FA Cup 3
Tues 12	Arsenal (H, 8pm)
Sat 16	Manchester United (H, 3pm)
Sat 23	Norwich City (A, 3pm)
Wed 27	Capital One Cup S-F 2
Sat 30	Emirates FA Cup 4

FEBRUARY

Tues 2	Leicester City (A, 8pm)
Sat 6	Sunderland (H, 3pm)
Sat 13	Aston Villa (A, 3pm)
Thu 18	UEFA Europa League R of 32 1
Sat 20	Emirates FA Cup 5
Thu 25	UEFA Europa League R of 32 2
Sat 27	Everton (H, 3pm)

MARCH

Tues 1	Manchester City (H, 8pm)
Sat 5	Crystal Palace (A, 3pm)
Sat 12	Chelsea (H, 3pm)
Sat 12	Emirates FA Cup 6
Sat 19	Southampton (A, 3pm)

APRIL

Sat 2	Tottenham Hotspur (H, 3pm)
Sat 9	Stoke City (H, 3pm)
Sat 16	Bournemouth (A, 3pm)
Sat 23	Newcastle United (H, 3pm)
Sat 23	Emirates FA Cup S-F
Sat 30	Swansea City (A, 3pm)

MAY

Sat 7	Watford (H, 3pm)
Sun 15	West Bromwich Albion (A, 3pm)
Sat 21	Emirates FA Cup final



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Didi Hamann

Tackling isn't a dying art – it's just a more refined discipline these days

When I arrived in English football to join Newcastle United from Bayern Munich in the summer of 1998 I was well aware that the game here wouldn't be the same as what I'd experienced previously. I knew the pace would be a bit quicker and that there was a more physical element allowed.

We played Charlton at home on the opening weekend and it certainly was different, but it was in our second match away at Chelsea that I realised just how different. About 15 minutes in, the ball bounced up to roughly chest-height. I went to hook it on and as I did Frank Leboeuf came flying in with his studs up. We both got to the ball at roughly the same time and I fell to the floor. Because Frank's foot had been so high I instantly assumed it would be a free-kick for me. In the Bundesliga it would definitely have been and probably a booking for him too. But the whistle I'd expected never came. Instead the referee just waved play on and the game continued.

I remember sitting on the turf thinking: 'wow, this is new'. There and then I realised exactly what type of challenges were seen as acceptable in English football.

It was an insight for me because in Germany the games were never that physical, although training could sometimes be rough. I even remember some sessions having to be abandoned at Bayern because everyone was getting stuck in. The coaches liked to see that.

"Fans in English grounds relish a challenge as much as a goal"

The Premier League was the opposite. Training never contained too many proper tackles, but when you went out on the field for a game there were loads. I think the crowd is a big reason for that. Supporters in English grounds almost relish a challenge as much as a goal or an assist. You would make a tackle and instantly feel the buzz from the stands.

It was great, especially if a game had been going flat or things were against you. All of a sudden the fans really had something to feed off and in return their reaction gave the team more energy. Of course the crowd's longing to see tackles can be misinterpreted by some players. I've seen guys arrive from France or Germany who think they can go around kicking opponents in English football. That's never going to be allowed.

Instead, the game here is about controlled aggression. We'll often hear people complain that you can't really tackle now because you will get sent off. I don't think that's the case. If you look around the Premier League you will see guys like Nemanja Matic, Fernando, Fernandinho and Francis Coquelin who are all capable of the skill required to tackle well. And it is definitely a skill.

While hefty but fair challenges are eye-catching and impressive, it's just as important to know when to tackle or when not to. Quite often it's more effective to nick the ball away or be in the right place to intercept a pass rather than having to go in to a 50:50. But when you play in the centre of the field you will inevitably have to make big challenges at some point – it just comes with the territory. The space there is so crowded that usually you are never more than five or ten yards away from an opponent.

That's why you see thunderous but fair challenges and I hope we always will because, for me, it's an attractive element of the Premier League.

Follow Didi on Twitter @dietmarhamann



Joe Gomez thwarts Arsenal's Bellerin



Exclusive interviews with three star players plus the Ladies keeper on the comeback trail and the world of goalscoring subs

The right stuff

After playing so well against Liverpool in the past Christian Benteke says the red jersey is the perfect fit

It is around one o'clock in the afternoon in late August and bright sunshine beams in through the skylights atop the re-designed reception area at the Reds' Melwood training HQ.

The physically imposing figure of Christian Benteke emerges into the foyer, offering a warm handshake and a winning smile. He has good reason to be cheerful. The previous evening he marked his Anfield debut with a goal in front of the Kop: the winning goal to boot, proving enough to see off a spirited challenge from newly-promoted Bournemouth and give the Reds six points after their first two Barclays Premier League fixtures of the new campaign.

Tall at six feet four inches, Benteke is also lean – a perfect fit for the Liverpool no9 shirt. Despite his physique, he is softly spoken and understated throughout this interview. He chooses his words carefully, offering considered responses. There are no sweeping statements about what he hopes to achieve at Liverpool, but his conversation is seasoned with a steely determination. It is indicative of a man who admits he has matured since leaving Belgian football to ply his trade in this country back in 2012.

Benteke says the goal against Bournemouth was welcome for various considerations but primarily to maintain the confidence levels every centre-forward thrives on. After all, it was only a decade ago that Peter Crouch – Liverpool's big-money signing of summer 2005 - failed to find the target in his first 18 games for the Reds, a saga which finally came to an end in early December.

"Liverpool fans are renowned for the way they push you forward"

"I am very happy. It was a great feeling to play in front of our fans for the first time and I was delighted because we were able to go on and win the game. It's important for the confidence of a striker to score on your home debut and that's what I joined Liverpool for. Hopefully I will have that feeling many times in the future."

After celebrating the strike with his team-mates, Benteke turned to the Kop and clenched his fists in a show of raw emotion. He says that becoming a fan favourite is not his primary focus, but scoring goals on a regular basis may be a welcome bi-product of his job description.



"The Liverpool supporters are renowned throughout football," he says. "For me, Liverpool is the right place to play and you always know that the '12th Man' are going to be there pushing you forward in good times and bad. It's good to have them behind us.

"I am a player who came here to improve myself and to be bigger than before, but I'm not coming in here with the intention of being a hero to the fans. Of course I would appreciate it if they love me, but it is not my main goal. If I do well, then everyone will be happy. It is up to me to make sure that happens."

Benteke's story began in Kinshasa, the capital city of the country now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo but referred to as Zaire when he was born in December 1990. Once a quiet fishing village, it now boasts a booming population of 10 million. When he was just two years old his father Jean-Pierre, a military man, decided to flee the hardline regime of President Mobutu and relocate the family to Liege. The Bentekes were firmly established in the Belgian city by the time Christian's siblings Jonathan and Sara were born.



Yes! Off the mark on his Anfield debut

There is now a long list of top-flight footballers born in Kinshasa and Benteke is happy to be among the roll call, stressing he is proud of his Congolese roots. "I know where I'm from and I will never forget," he says. "I started playing football in the street with my cousin. It was a lot of fun. One day we said together: 'Why not go into a club and play for a team?' and that's how everything started for me."

"Getting a good education helps you to have a longer career"

While Benteke's mind was often on football, his father was always at pains to stress the importance of education to his first son. It was advice taken seriously. "My father played football at a low level, he was not a professional. Every day he tried to give me some good advice because we know a football career is short and you have to make the right decisions.

"My dad was very strict. For him, the first priority in his mind was my schooling. He felt that if I could do well there, then football was next. Of course football was on my mind all the time, but I studied to make sure I completed my education and then I focused upon my football. I think when you have a good education it can help you to have a longer career because you can make better-informed decisions."



Time for smiles in training

Benteke developed at the Jeunesse Sportive Pierreuse club before moving back and forward between Standard Liege and Genk. He made his Jupiler League debut at Genk before rejoining Liege in 2009, only to be shipped out on loan a couple of times, first to KV Kortrijk in the Flanders region of Belgium. In 2009/10 they achieved their best-ever league finish of fourth – ironically four places above Standard Liege. Benteke was Kortrijk's top scorer with nine goals, six fewer than that season's Golden Boot winner, a talented teenager at Anderlecht named Romelu Lukaku.

Following another temporary spell, this time at Mechelen, the striker re-joined Genk ahead of the 2011/12 season and Benteke's 16 league goals had scouts from all over Europe visiting the club's Cristal Arena on a regular basis. "The loan spells helped me a lot because I grew through those experiences. It was all part of the footballing journey and they helped me to mature."

In August 2012 and still only 21, he secured a dream move to the Premier League when Aston Villa manager Paul Lambert invested £7 million to make him the new spearhead of the Villans attack. It proved to be a shrewd signing. A standout first season in the

Midlands saw him score 19 Premier League goals in 35 matches. He also returned double-figures in each of the following two league campaigns. His first Liverpool goal against Bournemouth was his 50th for an English club in all competitions.

"I am very proud indeed of what I have achieved over the three years that I have been here in England," he continues. "I want to keep going and I want to keep growing. My aim is always to improve myself."

At the time of going to press Benteke trailed Lukaku by a handful of goals as the top-flight's highest-scoring Belgian, 50 to 55. He smiles at the suggestion of an ongoing race having extra spice, given that the pair now ply their trade in the same city. "It is nice to have two Belgian players competing in what, for me, is the best league in the world. It is good for our country and also for us to be here.

"I haven't spoken to him about moving to Liverpool yet but I will do when we meet up for the national team in September. I am really looking forward to playing against Everton as it will be my first Merseyside derby and there could be a few Belgian players involved in the game. Obviously I hope that the team in red is going to win!"

Benteke now has well over 20 senior caps for his country having been handed the first back in May 2010 by his former Kortrijk coach, Georges Leekens. "Everyone was surprised that I took a young boy but he deserved to be with the team," recalls Leekens, a former Bruges defender who was in the team that lost to Liverpool in the UEFA Cup final of 1976 and the European Cup final two years later.

Benteke is part of a remarkable revival of the national team's fortunes and is keen to give Belgium's footballing fans something to cheer. The country failed to reach a major finals for a dozen years between 2002 and 2014 with Benteke observing "we had forgotten how to qualify." Nowadays there is almost an embarrassment of riches for head coach Marc Wilmots to call upon. In the attacking third alone, Benteke is competing for a spot with talents such as Lukaku, Eden Hazard, Kevin Mirallas, Adnan Januzaj, Dries Mertens and, of course, his new Anfield team-mate Divock Origi.

"I can't wait for the derby – there'll be a few Belgians playing!"

Heading into their final four qualifying games for Euro 2016, Belgium were tucked in behind Wales in second spot in Group B. The international break at the start of September sees them host Bosnia and Herzegovina and visit Cyprus knowing two victories will further strengthen their bid to advance to next summer's finals in France.

"I think anything can be possible as everything has stayed open during the first qualifiers. It is up to us now to win our games and stay in contention.

"We have an amazing squad and most of them play for one Premier League club or another. I think that is good for the country and we are really looking forward to doing something with this group. We can be happy with what we've got at the moment."

Of course, Benteke now has two colleagues at club and country in Origi and goalkeeper Simon Mignolet. He reveals that he contacted both before



More than a handful for Arsenal recently

"I just hope the fans can see the player who played against their team"



his move to Anfield "It is good for Belgium to have three representatives from a club such as Liverpool. It is something of which we can all be proud. I spoke with Simon and Divock but it was a bit hard because they were abroad at the time. It has just been since they came back that we have started to speak properly. They have told me about the city and that if I need anything, I just need to give them a shout. I feel that my family and I have settled well here which is important.

"I have been in contact with Eden [Hazard] by text message too. He is happy for me. He said that now I have a chance to win and to beat him!"

The no9 introduced himself to Liverpool fans with a stunning volley on his pre-season friendly debut at Swindon Town and always backs himself to find the net. "I believe I can score goals wherever I am. I think Liverpool is the right place to play my football and that was one of the reasons why I came here. I had a very good chat with the manager and I wanted to be part of this project.

"We have a good squad. Every player also represents his country and when you have a squad of internationals that says a lot about the strength that you have. Everybody knows that Liverpool is a big club and so it is normal that we have strength-in-depth but I really believe we are well-equipped to fight until the end."

Liverpool players and supporters will be mightily relieved to have the big man in their number. With five goals in six games against the Reds – including a couple in front of the Kop and another in last season's FA Cup semi-final at Wembley – they will be relieved Benteke won't be lining up for Tim Sherwood's side when Villa visit L4 at the end of September. Quizzed on why he was so successful against the Reds, he shrugs his shoulders, suggesting there is no ciphering the enigma. "I just hope the Liverpool fans see the player who played against them. My team-mates have welcomed me here and made me feel at ease. I have told them we won't fight like we used to do, instead we will fight any opponents together.

"Scoring goals gives me confidence in myself and confidence that I can help my team-mates. It is an honour to wear the shirt of such an important team and I will do everything in my power to be good for the club and my team-mates."

CONGO-BORN PREMIER LEAGUE XI



HERITA ILUNGA
(West Ham)



JOSE BOSINGWA
(Chelsea, QPR)



KIKI MUSAMPA
(Man City)



FABRICE MUAMBA
(Birmingham, Bolton)



CLAUDE MAKELELE
(Chelsea)



YOUSSOUF MULUMBU
(West Brom, Norwich)



LOMANA LUALUA
(Newcastle, Portsmouth)



ARIZA MAKUKULA
(Bolton)



GEOFFREY MUJANGI BIA
(Wolves)



LEROY LITA
(Swansea City)



CHRISTIAN BENTEKE
(Aston Villa, Liverpool)

Words: William Hughes



It's 20 years, incredibly, since Robbie Fowler scored two sublime goals at Old Trafford in a thrilling draw



Eric Cantona. Perhaps understandably it was the charismatic French forward who made most of the headlines when Manchester United drew 2-2 with Liverpool at Old Trafford on Sunday 1 October 1995. But who can forget the two fabulous goals scored by Robbie Fowler that day: an absolute thumper from the edge of the box then a cheeky chip from the same distance.

Eight games into the season and United and Liverpool were third and fourth respectively. The fixture was the first in eight months for Cantona after suspension, and the first in the Premier League for Fowler, 20 years old and sporting peroxide-blond hair, since scoring four against Bolton at Anfield the previous weekend.

Here he re-lives the occasion along with team-mate Ian Rush, Reds fan Nicky Allt, and Old Trafford ballboy Steve Bartram, with input on the day from Sky Sports commentator Martin Tyler and managers Roy Evans and Sir Alex Ferguson…

STEVE BARTRAM: I was a ballboy that season at Old Trafford. What I remember most about the day

SHARP

BOOM!

is everyone being so excited about Cantona coming back – so excited that I accidentally went into the away dressing-room rather than the ballboys' room next door. A deadly stare from Steve McManaman quickly told me that I shouldn't be there and I quickly retreated!

NICKY ALLT: Officially there were no away fans on the day due to construction work at Old Trafford. But there were still some of us in the ground, maybe 100 or 200 in total spread across two different groups. We were mixed in with people from the club and the players' wives or girlfriends. I ended up by the corner flag near the scoreboard, beside Neil Ruddock's wife and had a great laugh with her. I remember we were all joking about the way Sky had hyped up Cantona's comeback so much. He was obviously a good player, but they portrayed it as the most important event in the history of football.

IAN RUSH: Going in to the game all the TV coverage and newspapers seemed to be talking about was Cantona. It was everywhere you looked. So we wanted to go there and really show what we could do. We were determined to make an impression. Robbie certainly was, and he already stood out because of his bleached blond hair.

"It's the second coming of Eric Cantona," pronounced Martin Tyler on Sky Sports as the game kicked off. "An extraordinary event, overshadowing a fixture that always stands in its own right." And within two minutes the French ace sets up the opener for Nicky Butt, who lifts the ball over David James to make it 1-0 to the hosts. Old Trafford goes crazy. Liverpool though refuse to panic and on 33 minutes the equaliser arrives. Tyler again: "Fowler... Rush in the centre... Fowler didn't need him!"

STEVE: There was silence in the ground because initially everyone – including me – thought the ball had actually gone in the side-netting. I was at the side of the pitch, towards the Stretford End, and for someone to beat Peter Schmeichel from such a tight angle seemed highly unlikely.

ROBBIE: Just a few minutes before I was in the same position and crossed it to Rushie. He was millimetres away from scoring. The second time, I think Schmeichel and a few others were expecting the same thing. But I saw a



little gap and, to be honest, I just whacked the ball. I'd be lying if I said I aimed it to go where it went, but I did aim to score. It was the first goal I'd scored for Liverpool at Old Trafford, and on Cantona's comeback it kept the United supporters quiet for a while.

NICKY: 'What are you doing shooting from there?' was my reaction when I saw Fowler fire the ball towards goal. Then – like a flash – it was in the net. Typical Fowler, he was brilliant. It was quite an intimidating atmosphere because there were so few of us Liverpool fans in the stand. The place had been bouncing after they'd gone ahead early on and everything seemed to be following a script that Cantona was going to inspire United to victory. I remember the United fans were shocked when we started celebrating because they didn't expect any away fans to be there.

IAN: In those circumstances, when the home team have gone ahead early on and are on a high like United were, you could easily start thinking it's just not going to be a good day. Or you can roll your sleeves up and get on with it. That's what we did. I'd just missed a good chance before Robbie got his first. Beating Schmeichel was always difficult: you usually had to produce a good strike to get the ball past him and Robbie's first was certainly one of those.

It's 1-1 at the interval and seven minutes into the second half Fowler chases a pass from Michael Thomas down the left-hand channel towards the Stretford End. Tyler: "It's a fine ball from Thomas in behind Gary Neville for Fowler... Is he in again? He isss! Magnificently taken!"

ROBBIE: I knocked Gary Neville off the ball – always satisfying – and chipped Schmeichel to the sound of tumbleweed at a gutted Old Trafford.

IAN: Scoring away at United was never easy, I knew that myself. So to get two in the same game against a very good side showed just how superb Robbie was. He was at the peak of his powers then, one of the best forwards in the league.

NICKY: When Fowler and Neville came together there was an immediate roar from the home fans for a foul. But it was just a 50:50 and Robbie used his body superbly to protect the ball while creating space. With some players you're not surprised when they miss in a one-on-one situation. With Fowler it was the opposite: you were surprised if he didn't score those type of chances. But against Schmeichel you could never be sure because he was one of the best around at the time. Fowler was calm and clinical as he used his right foot to lift the ball over the keeper and beat him all-ends-up, which illustrates just how good Robbie was.

STEVE: I had a brilliant view from where I was stood. You could see the goal coming from the second that Michael Thomas played the pass. I think Gary Neville – and maybe some fans following his example – appealed for a foul by Fowler but it was never a free-kick. He showed great striker's savvy to use his body and then his wrong foot to chip Schmeichel. You never like admitting a rival player is good but there was no denying Fowler's quality.

Now it's the home side's turn to press for an equaliser, and with 71 minutes gone Cantona coolly makes it 2-2 from the penalty-spot after Ryan Giggs is brought down by Jamie Redknapp...

NICKY: A dubious penalty. I remember Cantona jumping on the pole attached to the goal to celebrate scoring. He was a bit odd but I liked him because he was different and he had a bit of class about him.

STEVE: Being 2-1 down obviously wasn't part of the United script so there was a relief when the equaliser came even if it probably was a flaky penalty. There was no doubt Eric would take it and score. He rarely missed.



ROBBIE: Cantona converted a dodgy penalty and I was erased from history!

An absorbing encounter ends with honours even. In the post-match press conference United boss Alex Ferguson generously admits: "Fowler's finishing was fantastic. The first one was good, but the second was absolutely first class." Liverpool boss Roy Evans says: "United supporters came to pay homage to Cantona, but Robbie Fowler was the star."

STEVE: Afterwards people were buzzing about Eric's every touch, but I think he had a quiet game in general – at least by his own standards. He got in on the headlines but the spotlight was firmly on Fowler at the end. I had a grudging admiration for his talent even if he did look ridiculous with his bleached hair!

NICKY: Fowler was brilliant that day. Unstoppable. United had a good defence and a great goalkeeper but that wasn't enough. When he was in that kind of form he must have been a nightmare to play against.

IAN: You play for the fans. They want heroes and the best way for any Liverpool player to become a hero is by scoring goals against United and Everton. Robbie did that on numerous occasions and his two strikes that day were some of his best.

ROBBIE: We played them off the park for most of the game. Mind you, all you ever hear about from that game was 'Cantona's comeback'. It's as though my goals were never scored. Not that I'm bitter or anything!

BE IN THAT



The beautiful game is also a numbers game and we've got stacks of stats about Martin Skrtel

0940

miles between John Lennon International Airport and Bratislava-Ivanka Airport in Martin's home nation of Slovakia

TWO NINE FIVE

Martin's first home appearance of season 2015/16 was his 295th for the club, putting him joint-58th on the all-time list with Sammy Lee

01

Martin has been sent off just once in his Reds career – at Tottenham in 2011

NUMBER



TEN

Martin has scored with headers from corners 10 times as a Liverpool player

45.5%

Liverpool's win percentage when Skrtel scores

7

staples were inserted into Skrtel's head to close a wound before he came back on to head a 97th minute equaliser v Arsenal

1973

is the year that *Vinea* – a grape-based soft drink Martin's ranks as his favourite – was invented by Slovakian biochemist Jan Farkas

17

goals scored by Martin in a Liverpool shirt, one more than Ron Yeats got during his time at Anfield

96

the number Skrtel helped to tattoo onto the back of Kopite Barry Nicholls in memory of the Hillsborough victims as part of a fundraising campaign



SIX TIMES MARTIN HAS CAPTAINED LIVERPOOL

BRING O
THE NIG

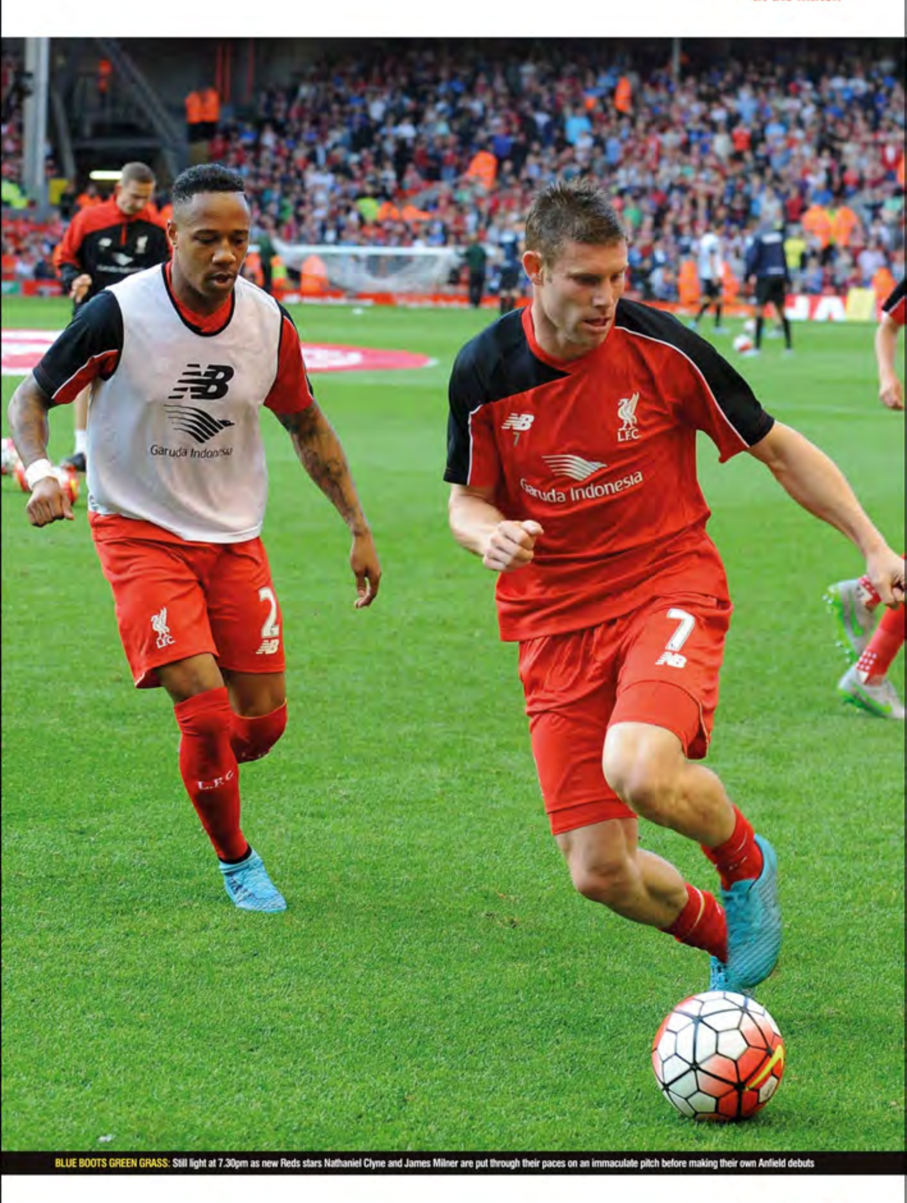




NHT

On a pleasant Monday evening Liverpool FC play their first home fixture of the new season – and Anfield's special aura shines through

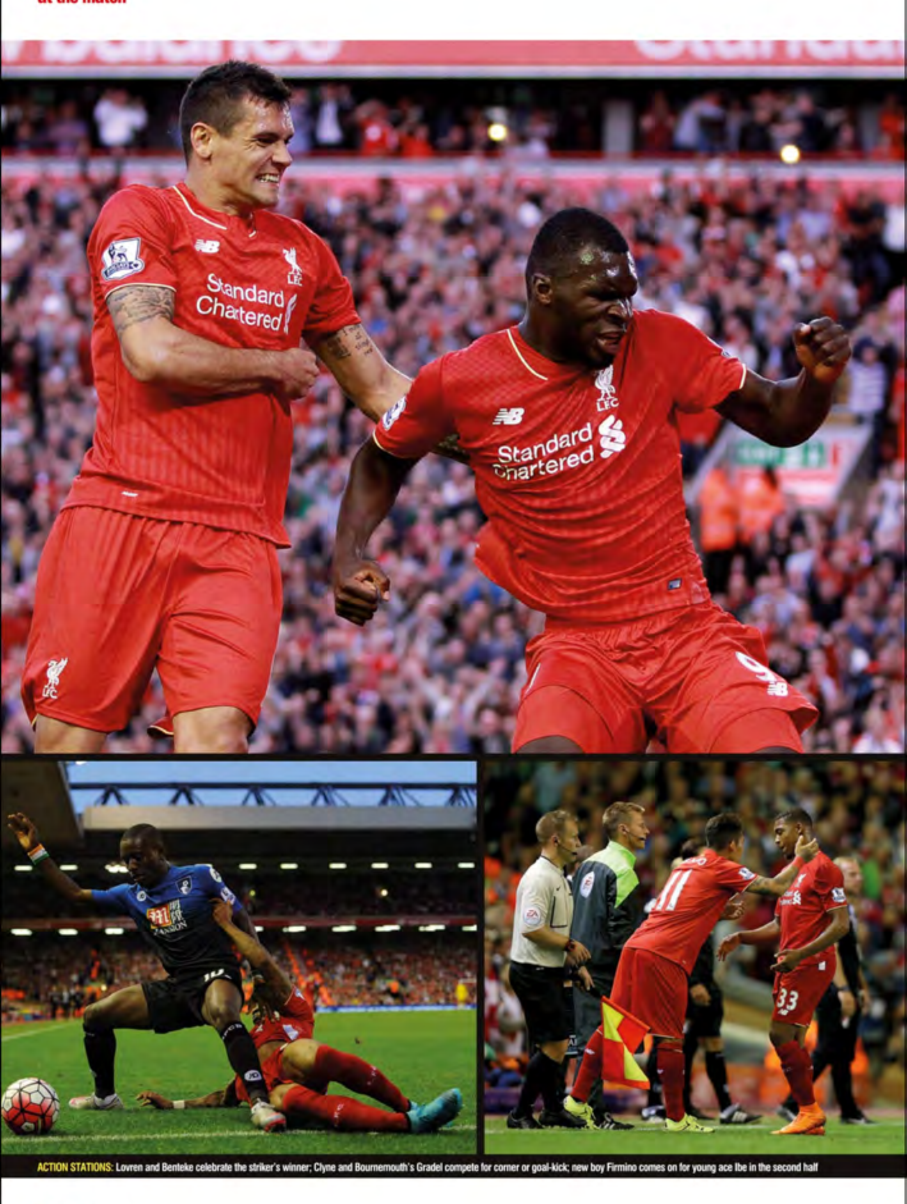




BLUE BOOTS GREEN GRASS: Still light at 7.30pm as new Reds stars Nathaniel Clyne and James Milner are put through their paces on an immaculate pitch before making their own Anfield debuts


BARCLAYS
PREMIER LEAGUE

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING: The matchball on its podium before kick-off; the home team's dressing-room; and the boss as YNWA rings around the ground for the first time in season 2015/16



ACTION STATIONS: Lovren and Benteke celebrate the striker's winner; Clyne and Bournemouth's Gradel compete for corner or goal-kick; new boy Firmino comes on for young ace Ibe in the second half

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new balance
Garuda Indonesia



KOP END CORNER: beneath the mighty arch of the Main Stand's new truss, skipper Jordan Henderson prepares to take a corner – later it's from his teasing cross that Benteke scores the only goal



OFF THE BENCH IN THE NET

Your favourite goal by a Liverpool substitute? Fifty years since it happened for the first time, here's our considered top 20…

When Geoff Strong headed a late equaliser against West Ham on Wednesday 15 September 1965, Kopites witnessed an Anfield first. Geoff became the first-ever goalscoring substitute for Liverpool Football Club...wearing the no2 shirt!

Because subs were such a new development back then, there wasn't a no12 jersey for Strong so he had to wear the shirt belonging to the man he replaced, Chris Lawler, and was told to lead the line by Bill Shankly. You could say it was a different way of playing two upfront.

Substitutes had only been introduced at the start of that 1965/66 campaign, and Shanks didn't even bother naming a sub for four of the opening seven league games! One change was permitted for an injury, and Liverpool's very first substitution had actually been made 13 months earlier when Phil Chisnall replaced Alf Arrowsmith in the Charity Shield – also against West Ham at Anfield. Evidently they were happier to try out such new-fangled things in friendlies.

Incredibly it was another two-and-a-half years after Strong's strike until another Reds sub netted again, Bobby Graham nicking a late winner at Leeds – whereas now, with three subs from seven options permitted per game, goals from the bench are taken as read.

A total of 246 goals have been supplied by Liverpool substitutes (at the time of writing). So to mark the 50th anniversary of our first goalscoring sub we've picked out 20 memorable occasions when Reds players have gone from wearing trackies on the touchline to sticking the ball over the line, starting with that historic first strike...

GEOFF STRONG
Liverpool 1 West Ham 1
First Division 15 Sept 1965

The fixture computer was a lot more random in 1965 – this was Liverpool's second league meeting with the Hammers and it was still only September – but it looked like Geoff Hurst's goal would give Ron Greenwood's men both points underneath the Anfield floodlights. The injured Chris Lawler was withdrawn at half-time and, wearing his no2 shirt, Strong was sent on upfront to become the first-ever substitute used in a league game for the Reds. His 76th minute equaliser, a glancing header from Willie Stevenson's cross, made his introduction all the more memorable.

DAVID FAIRCLOUGH
Liverpool 1 Everton 0
First Division 3 April 1976

While Red Rum was being beaten into second place by Rag Trade in the Grand National, Everton were being beaten by an 88th-minute winner from a red-headed teenager in a rare 11am kick-off at Anfield. Nicknamed 'The Bionic Carrot' due to his athleticism and flame-red locks, 19-year-old Fairclough – who'd already scored in two Central League derbies that season – won a tackle near the halfway line before cutting past three Blues defenders with a dazzling run and firing past Toffees keeper Dai Davies at his near post. "I would have entered him for the National if it were possible," said boss Bob Paisley afterwards. "He would've won that too!"

JIMMY CASE
Liverpool 3 Bruges 2
UEFA Cup final first leg
28 April 1976

Remember the night when Liverpool scored three goals in six minutes of the

second half of a European final with a sub getting the second to complete a remarkable comeback? Well it happened again in Istanbul 29 years later. The Reds were 2-0 down to Bruges at Anfield in the first leg of the UEFA Cup final only for Ray Kennedy (59 mins), substitute Jimmy Case (61) and Kevin Keegan (64 from a penalty, and he didn't need the rebound like Xabi Alonso) to turn the game on its head. Case's goal came after Kennedy had struck the post. "I thought for a split-second that the shot was going in," he recalled. "But suddenly the ball rebounded and was coming my way. It could've hit my thigh and run out of play, but I jumped instinctively and side-footed the ball into the net." As if something like that would ever happen again…

DAVID FAIRCLOUGH

Liverpool 3 St Etienne 1
European Cup quarter-final second leg 16 March 1977

Quite simply the most famous goal by a substitute in Anfield history. Cue Gerald Sinstadt: *"And Fairclough is onside… This now could be interesting… Fairclough! SUPERSUB STRIKES AGAIN!"*

DAVID JOHNSON

Liverpool 7 Tottenham 0
First Division 2 Sept 1978

One-touch football. A decent Spurs side featuring two Argentine World Cup winners thrashed 7-0. Bob Paisley saying Terry McDermott's seventh "must be the best goal Anfield has ever seen." And all this after the Reds lost skipper Emlyn Hughes to injury after 25 minutes and had to reshuffle with Phil Neal playing centre-half and Jimmy Case at right-back. David Johnson came on, netting the fourth with his right foot and the fifth with his left. Only a remarkable overhead kick goal-line clearance from John Duncan prevented Johnno from becoming the first-ever Reds sub to score a hat-trick, but 8-0 would just have been greedy.


Johnno thumps one home against Spurs

IAN RUSH
Liverpool 3 Everton 2
FA Cup final 20 May 1989

Rushie enjoyed scoring twice against Everton so much in the 1986 FA Cup final that he did it again, at the same end of Wembley, in 1989 – although this time he had the no14 on his back, both of his strikes came in extra time and no cameras were harmed during the scoring. "I refused to wear no12," he recalled in *Ian Rush: My Scrapbook*. "I just felt that 12 was unlucky, so every time I was sub I always wore 14." The double-strike ensured he broke Dixie Dean's all-time derby goalscoring record, making him unlucky for Everton no matter what number shirt he was wearing.

STEVE STAUNTON
Liverpool 3 Wigan Ath 0
Littlewoods Cup 2R 2L
4 Oct 1989

When Ian Rush got injured in the second leg of a League Cup tie against Wigan, Reds manager Kenny Dalglish brought out his emergency striker: left-back Steve Staunton, who ended up playing upfront with Jan Molby! 'Stan' had only scored once for the Reds but netted a second-half treble to become the first sub in LFC history to get a hat-trick. Footnote: this tie should've been away but was played at Anfield as Wigan's old Springfield Park ground could only accommodate 378 away fans due to safety restrictions.

MARK WALTERS
Liverpool 2 Blackburn 1
Premier League 13 Dec 1992

Not only was Mark Walters the last Liverpool substitute to score in the old First Division – on the day Manchester United lost the league on Merseyside – he was also our first scoring sub in the Premier League. Which was bad news for Kenny Dalglish. King Kenny was in charge of a side against the Reds for the first time and saw Blackburn go behind in the 77th minute when Walters cut inside David May to lash home. Alan Shearer equalised, but that man Walters slid Steve McManaman's low cross in at the far post to grab a dramatic late winner in what was also our first-ever Anfield win in a game screened live by Sky Sports.

RONNY ROSENTHAL
Liverpool 1 Everton 0 Premier League 20 March 1993

Okay, so he infamously missed a sitter at Aston Villa earlier in the season, but a 91st-minute Merseyside derby winner in front of the Spion Kop more than made up for it. Ian Rush nutmegged Dave Watson with a through-ball and Rocket Ronny ran onto it and lashed a low left-footed drive across keeper Neville Southall into the bottom corner.



Not the only shot of Mark Walters in this issue…



Ronny's rocket













PATRIK BERGER

Leicester City 0 Liverpool 3
Premier League 15 Sept 1996

Signed from Borussia Dortmund after starring at Euro 96, Patrik Berger was such an eagerly-anticipated signing that 10,000 fans turned up at Anfield to watch him play (and score) in a reserve match against Nottingham Forest, and it wasn't long before he was finding the net for the first team. Introduced at half-time at Leicester with the game goalless, Paddy smashed a left-footed drive into the net and enjoyed it so much that he repeated the trick, celebrating both strikes in front of the travelling Kop in Filbert Street's East Stand. "I've never seen a ball move so fast in my life," said Foxes keeper Kasey Keller. "It's a good job I didn't get in the way of either shot or I'd have been back in the net with them."



Liverpool supporters welcome a new hero

FLORENT SINAMA-PONGOLLE AND NEIL MELLOR

Liverpool 3 Olympiacos 1
Champions League group 8 Dec 2004

Stevie's 'Oh you beauuuuuuuty' moment has gone down in Anfield folklore. But if substitutes 'Flo' and 'Gerd' hadn't found the net before him it would've counted for little. Three second-half goals were required and Sinama-Pongolle, introduced at the interval, notched the first from close-range from Harry Kewell's cross. Neil Mellor had also only been on for two minutes when he scrambled the ball in and just for good measure it was Neil who knocked the ball down for Gerrard's most famous Anfield strike.

SCORING FIRSTS

First Division: Geoff Strong v West Ham (H) 15/09/65
European Fairs Cup: Ian Callaghan v Dundalk (A) 30/09/69
FA Cup: Alun Evans v Leicester City (A) 26/11/69
League Cup: Phil Boersma v Carlisle United (H) 19/09/72
UEFA Cup: Phil Boersma v AEK Athens (A) 07/11/72
European Cup: Terry McDermott v Crusaders (A) 28/09/76
Screen Sport Super Cup: Jan Molby v Norwich City (H) 06/05/86
Premier League: Mark Walters v Blackburn Rovers (H) 13/12/92
European Cup Winners Cup: Stan Collymore v Brann Bergen (H) 20/03/97
Champions League: Jari Litmanen v Bayer Leverkusen (A) 09/04/02
European Super Cup: Djibril Cisse v CSKA Moscow (N) 26/08/05
Europa League: Lucas v Steaua Bucharest (H) 16/09/10

VLADIMIR SMICER

Liverpool 3 AC Milan 3 (LFC win 3-2 on pens) Champions League final 25 May 23005

On for the injured Harry Kewell and operating at wing-back for the first time in his Liverpool career, Smicer hadn't scored all season or netted in the Champions League since 2002. So when fellow sub Didi Hamann teed him up 25 yards out, two minutes after Steven Gerrard had pulled a goal back, few Reds expected Vladi to score. As he ran back to the halfway line, arms outstretched, screaming with passion, you could sense the belief surging around three sides of the Ataturk. That our three winning penalties in the shoot-out were scored by Rafa's three substitutes should not be overlooked either.

DJIBRIL CISSE

Liverpool 3 CSKA Moscow 1
UEFA Super Cup final 26 Aug 2005

A Djibril II in Stade Louis II ensured the Reds won the Super Cup in Monaco, although there was some fortune about his 82nd minute equaliser. He'd only been on for three minutes when a defender's attempted clearance struck him on the arm and lobbed keeper Igor Akinfeev, allowing Cisse to tap in. It meant yet another final involving Liverpool went into extra-time and it was Djibril who got the job done after he raced on to Hamann's pass and beat Akinfeev at the second attempt.

RYAN BABEL

Liverpool 4 Arsenal 2
Champions League quarter-final 2L 8 April 2008

Only David Fairclough has come off the Liverpool bench to score more goals than Ryan Babel, and while his collection include a winner against Manchester United and a double in the 8-0 thrashing of Besiktas, his game-clincher in an epic Champions League quarter-final against the Gunners was unforgettable. The Dutch attacker had been brought down for the 86th minute penalty that put the Reds ahead 4-3 on aggregate. With Arsenal throwing everything forward in stoppage time, suddenly Babel broke away, shrugged off Cesc Fabregas and fired past Fabianski to leave Anfield rocking.

ANDREA DOSSENA

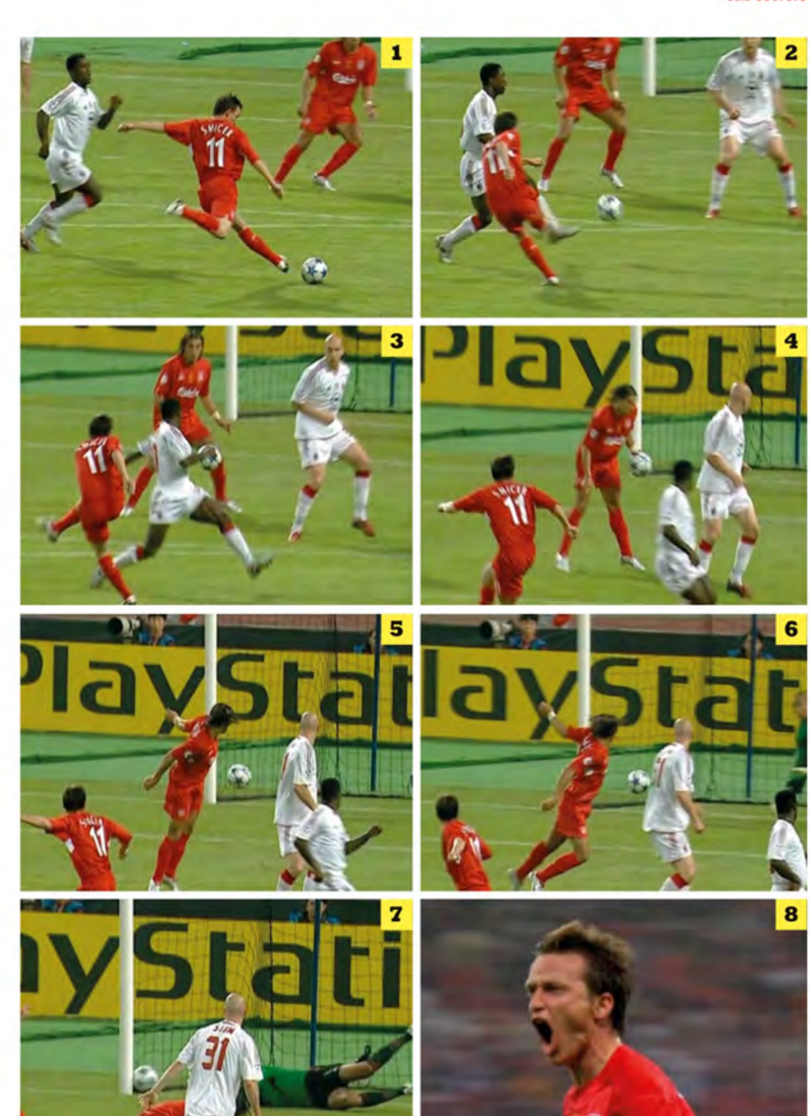
Manchester United 1
Liverpool 4 Premier League 14 March 2009

Having come on to score Liverpool's fourth in a 4-0 win against Real Madrid on the preceding Wednesday, Andrea Dossena's week got even better. He rounded off a remarkable five days by coming off the substitutes bench to score Liverpool's fourth in a 4-1 win at Old Trafford. Running on to a Pepe Reina goal-kick, the Italian full-back let the ball bounce once before sending a side-footed lob over keeper Edwin van der Sar.

YOSSI BENAYOUN

Fulham 0 Liverpool 1
Premier League 4 April 2009

100/1 shot Mon Mome had won the Grand National that afternoon, but it took only one shot from Yossi Benayoun to give Liverpool a 92nd-minute winner at Craven Cottage and put them top of the Premier League. That Yossi was struggling with injuries when he lashed home his cross-shot made his finish all the more impressive and had Rafa Benitez saying: "That will be the most important goal of the season if we can win the title but there are a lot of games to come."



You can never ever tire of it, can you?


Suarez and a sign of things to come

STEVEN GERRARD
Liverpool 3 Napoli 1 Europa League group 4 Nov 2010

Although Liverpool played in all-red against Napoli at Anfield, it's believed that Steven Gerrard got changed in a phone-box rather than the dressing-room and wore a cape and giant 'S' on the chest as he came off the bench to beat the Neapolitans with a 14-minute hat-trick. His first came after Reds old-boy Andrea Dossena left a back-pass short and Gerrard slid in to beat keeper De Sanctis. His second was from the spot, and his third was a delightful chip after Dirk Kuyt worked hard to win the ball. Did anyone ever see Stevie in the same room as Clark Kent?

LUIS SUAREZ
Liverpool 2 Stoke City 0 Premier League 2 Feb 2011

Some new signings start as they mean to go on. Luis Suarez was one of them. Sixteen minutes after being sent on by Kenny Dalglish to make his debut, he raced through the Stoke defence, rounded Asmir Begovic and slotted the ball into the net despite the desperate attempts of Andy Wilkinson to keep it out. With a record of five goals in eight sub appearances for the Reds, he could've been a modern day super sub. But the bench is the last place you want to see him on a matchday.

EARLIEST, LATEST...

Latest goal by a sub: Nick Barmby's 120th minute strike in extra-time against Fulham in a 3-0 League Cup victory at Anfield in December 2000. The record was previously held by striker Paul Walsh who netted in the 119th minute of the epic 1985 FA Cup semi-final against Manchester United at Goodison Park to force a replay.

Earliest goal by a sub: Only four first-half goals have been scored by Liverpool substitutes in our entire history. The earliest was Vladimir Smicer's effort at home to Charlton Athletic in 2002 while the other three were netted by Phil Boersma (39 mins v Carlisle United, 1972), David Fairclough (39 mins v Burnley, 1976) and John Wark (40 mins v Man United, 1986).


Sturridge saves the Reds at Goodison

1


2


3


4

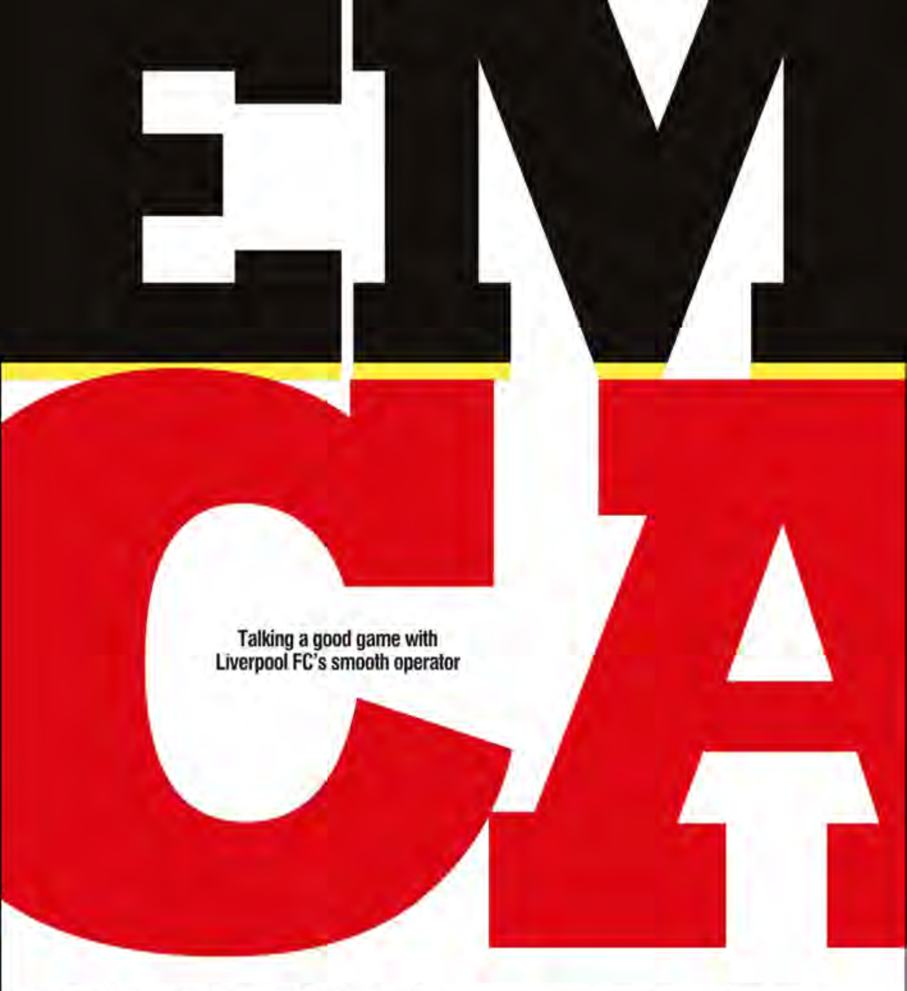
DIRK KUYT
Liverpool 2 Manchester United 1 FA Cup 4R 28 Jan 2012

It was only the fifth time Liverpool and United had met in the FA Cup at Anfield and with two minutes to play it looked like a replay was on the cards. But, as they say in his native Katwijk-aan-Zee, 'Cometh the 88th minute, cometh Dirk Kuyt' and the tireless Dutchman didn't disappoint. He'd netted a hat-trick against United 10 months earlier and this time he smashed the ball past David de Gea at his near post after Andy Carroll flicked it on. They heard the celebrations all the way back in Holland.

DANIEL STURRIDGE
Everton 3 Liverpool 3 Premier League 23 Nov 2013

There have been some crazy derbies across the park in recent times and the 3-3 draw in 2013 was up there with the maddest. One up, 2-1 down, 3-2 down. It looked like Romelu Lukaku's 82nd-minute goal would settle matters, but Daniel Sturridge had other ideas. Steven Gerrard whipped an 89th minute free-kick into the Everton box and Sturridge rose highest to flick a header into the far corner. It was the first time a Reds sub had ever scored in a league derby at Goodison Park, and while it wasn't a winning goal it didn't half feel like one to the travelling Kopites.

Words: Chris McLoughlin



Talking a good game with Liverpool FC's smooth operator

How do you reflect on on your first season as a Liverpool player?
For me personally it wasn't good initially because I got an injury not long after I joined Liverpool, but when I had recovered from it I was involved in all the games - apart from the one I was suspended for! There was also a bad game in which I was taken off at half-time, but other than that it was a good first year for me at this club.

You played in a number of different positions last season. How challenging was it to adapt to that?
It can take time if you have to keep changing positions, but I feel I am quite good at doing so. Obviously I had a few problems in some positions and I do prefer to play in my normal midfield role, but I feel I adapted well.

Had you ever played on the right-hand side of a three-man defence before being utilised in that role last season?
No. Never! I'd never actually played as one of three at the back, but I had played in a four-man defence so I was used to some of the aspects of the job. Because of that I didn't really find it difficult to adapt as I might have done without that experience.

You were asked to play at right-back in some matches - was adapting tough?
Yeah, it was really tough. I think that I can pretty much play in any position on a football pitch, but right-back was a



new one for me to adjust to. I feel more comfortable playing at left-back out of the two full-back positions.

Even though you are right-footed?
Yes because I actually played in that left-back position a couple of times when I was at Bayer Leverkusen and Bayern Munich. I find it easier to play on that side being right-footed as you can naturally pass the ball inside to team-mates on the the foot you are most comfortable with which is something I am okay with.


"Sometimes I think it can be easier for a right-footer to play at left-back"

"I enjoy the chance to get forward but I'll work at a more defensive role too"


Pre-match prep

What are the biggest differences between playing football in the Premier League and Bundesliga?
In England the football is a lot faster than when you play in Germany. When you get the ball here there is instantly a player from the other team there, pressing you and challenging you. That makes it a lot harder when you are in possession. English football is also physically tougher than football in Germany.

Do you find it strange that a physically tougher league doesn't have a winter break?
Yes, that was strange for me. Normally we have two weeks holiday in Germany but here we have to play games at Christmas. Then we even had a game at Anfield against Leicester City on New Year's Day so I didn't even see the new year come in! It also meant I didn't have any time with my family either.

You started your first pre-season game for Liverpool on 19 July 2014, played over Christmas for the first time and only finished the campaign on 27 June 2015 at the Under-21 Euro Championships...
I only had three weeks holiday after that season and those weeks absolutely flew by. After such a demanding year you do feel like you need more time, but then I must admit that I was looking forward to playing football again by the time my holiday finished.

You came on against both Stoke and Bournemouth in a deeper central midfield role and Brendan Rodgers has said he sees this being the position where your future lies. Is it the role you enjoy the most?
I think I can play in that position and I prefer to be in midfield, but my favourite position is the traditional no8 role. I enjoy being given the opportunity to go forward, to be part of attacks and involved in our approach play. In the defensive position I obviously have to defend more – to close ranks in front of the defence – and be more disciplined. I think this is something which I can work on. I'm a player who naturally makes runs to the left, to the right and through the middle whereas in the defensive midfield role you need to remain solid in your position in front of the back-four.

The manager also said recently that you've got an "inbuilt football brain" that allows you to be versatile and operate well in different positions. You must have enjoyed hearing such a compliment...
It is always nice to hear your manager say something nice like that about you and I think it is because I can play in a number of positions. I also think it is because when I am asked to move to different positions I take it on board and get on with whatever job is asked of me.

You mentioned earlier about having less time on the ball in English football – do you work on that at Melwood more than you did in Germany?
No, the training here is not that different to how we trained in Germany. One thing that is different is that you have more time on the ball in training sessions in Germany whereas here, because of the nature of opponents putting you under pressure as soon as you get the ball, the training sessions are quicker. That has helped me to adapt and take on board the different style of play.

Several new players joined the club this summer including James Milner who is operating in a central midfield role. How have you found playing alongside him so far?
I haven't had too much experience of playing alongside him just yet, but it is clear that he is a fighter, is very experienced and is capable


Melwood training

"It's clear that James is a fighter and can also play very good football"

of playing good football. He has obviously done very well in the first couple of games as a Liverpool player and I have already seen that he does pass on what he knows to the younger players. He talks to us a lot and that can only help us.

Was it important for Liverpool to sign an experienced midfielder over the summer following the departure of club talisman Steven Gerrard?

We have a good mix in the Liverpool team. We have got experienced players, but also young players. The experienced players need to pass on their knowledge to the younger members of the squad so with Stevie leaving at the end of last season it is definitely good to have another experienced player like James Milner here.

The signing of Christian Benteke, has led to plenty of talk about whether there will be a change of style from Liverpool as the season progresses. Do you think it's likely?

Christian is a very important player for us. Last year we didn't have a tall striker – a big man upfront who could hold the ball up and bring other players around him into the game. We needed a player like that and we have already seen that Christian has got much more to his game than just being able to hold the ball up. He is good with his feet and scores goals, just what we needed.

Liverpool aren't the only club to have signed a number of players this summer. Do you think it's a stronger Premier League this season?

Last year was quite a difficult year for us and I agree that all of our competitors have strengthened their their squads by signing players, but then so have we. The gap between us and our rivals certainly isn't any bigger, but we do have to play better than we did last season if we are to finish higher up the Premier League.

Is the main aim for the season a top-four finish to qualify for the Champions League? Or are you setting your sights higher?

Well yes, top four is obviously something we are striving for, but we have to look at how we are doing game by game. Certainly we wouldn't be complaining if we were in first position! Of course we need to see how we are getting on before thinking about anything like that, but we know that we must finish in the top four this season.

Finally, we're speaking ahead of the Europa League draw but our readers will now know the identity of our opponents in the group stage. How important is a good Europa League campaign for Liverpool?

It is very important for us as we want to present ourselves well to the outside world in European football as well as in the Premier League. I believe we have a good squad that can go far in this competition and we feel we need to really up the ante in Europe this season because we didn't perform well enough in it last year.

Interview: Chris McLoughlin

ULTIM

Perpetual motion



Popping up in the final third to deliver a cross, and just seconds later being back at the other end to thwart a striker… Full-back is a hugely demanding role. It requires boundless energy, an asset that was consistently displayed by Steve Nicol who would regularly burst forward while rarely being caught out at the other end. This was despite his highly unusual eating habits, as revealed by his compatriot Alan Hansen: "Dietitians would be horrified at the amount [Steve] ate. It was not unusual for him to go through six or eight packs of crisps in one go. But he never carried any excess weight, hardly missed a tackle and gave the impression of being able to bomb up and down that right touchline forever. Suffice it to say that after our first match together on the right, I thought: where have you been all my life?"

Perfect positioning



Knowing where to be at exactly the right time is a requirement of every top-class defender, particularly those who play on either side of the defence. Moving infield to cover for a centre-back has to be done with perfect timing, otherwise an entire flank can be left exposed. Noughties Reds full-back Steve Finnan was a master at this, often popping up in the area to clear the danger and help out his fellow defenders. Never the quickest, the experienced Irishman who played in all four divisions of English football just knew where to be. That was why very few of the best wingers in the Premier League or Champions League got the better of him.

ATE FULL BACK

It's a position which requires much of the modern footballer – and some key attributes from past masters

Stopping the opposition



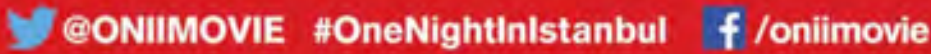
The first priority for any full-back has to be curtailing attacks, whether through tackling or stopping crosses coming into the box. Joey Jones relished a physical battle against wingers, while Jamie Carragher blocking an attempted delivery into the area was a regular sight that left opponents frustrated and team-mates hugely appreciative. Having those defenders makes the life of a centre-back less complicated.

Forward thinking



The best full-backs have to be able to contribute going forward, and goals from this area of the team can often be the difference between success and failure. Chris Lawler was an expert at getting on the scoresheet, illustrating – as Bob Paisley perfectly put it – "the brain of a striker" to find the net a remarkable 61 times in a red shirt, all of which came from open play. Those forays forward from deep are not all about scoring either: with their attacking colleagues often tightly-marked, assists from full-backs are crucial. Stig Inge Bjornebye (pictured) demonstrated this perfectly in big games during the 1990s, providing the crosses which saw Neil Ruddock equalise in the 3-3 draw with Man United and Robbie Fowler head home the decisive effort in the (second) 4-3 victory over Newcastle at Anfield.




@ONIIMOVIE #OneNightInIstanbul /oniimovie


L.F.C.

Here there and everywhere



Being able to operate equally effectively on either flank, regardless of whether you're naturally right or left-footed, is an extremely difficult task. Yet it provides huge benefits for a squad, allowing a manager to cover for injuries and suspensions without having to risk an untried individual in an unfamiliar role. In recent times Jon Flanagan has demonstrated he is up to such a job, comfortable as a right-back prior to doing the same on the other side of the field during 2013/14. Before him Phil Neal and Rob Jones did likewise.

Supreme fitness



Being fit enough to regularly take to the field week after week is vital for any player who wants to be a key component of a successful team. Phil Neal set the benchmark in this area, playing a club record 417 games in a row between 1976 and 1983. And when he returned from an injury enforced three-game break which ended that incredible run, he then featured in another 127 consecutive matches. His determination to get on the pitch no-matter-what saw him regularly play with a knock, including a fractured cheekbone and a broken toe which trainer Ronnie Moran created a plaster cast to protect.

SAVING G

After a recent operation Liverpool Ladies goalkeeper Danielle Gibbons is targeting a return to regular action soon. This is her moving story

Danielle Gibbons started this season with a secret. When the rest of her Liverpool Ladies team-mates reported back for pre-season training, the 22-year-old took to the field knowing she faced major surgery in the summer.

On Monday 6 July, less than a week after England's women had clinched the bronze medal at the World Cup finals, Danielle went into Salford Royal Hospital to undergo a 10-hour operation to remove an acoustic neuroma.

The story began two-and-a-half years earlier. The Preston-born shot-stopper recalls: "I had some tinnitus in my ear and a little bit of deafness. I thought there was something blocked in the ear so I went to the doctors a couple of times and then to A & E. They said they thought I had a virus but I knew I hadn't. Eventually my doctor sent me for a scan. They thought it was probably a million-to-one chance but decided that they'd have a look anyway and that was when they discovered that I had a little tumour.

"Acoustic neuroma is a rare tumour and because I am young it is more abnormal. Even then they said it's probably not going to grow so you're unlikely to have to do anything with it."

Danielle, who was part of the Liverpool Ladies squad that won back-to-back FA WSL titles in 2013 and 2014, followed that advice

> **"To rebuild my balance I've had to do simple things like pick things off the floor"**

until an unwanted development last autumn. "I had a scan last November and they noticed that the tumour had grown. Then they advised me to get it taken out while I was still young, fit and healthy as there was a better chance of recovery.

"My hearing has fully gone now on my left side and to get the tumour out they had to cut through a hole in my skull and through my hearing nerve and balance nerve. In order to rebuild my balance I've had to do simple things like picking things up off the floor. My hearing will never come back but the right side will take over and over-compensate. The deafness is something that I'm going to have to get over, but it hasn't been a problem yet."

Danielle was given several options before deciding to undergo the lengthy surgery to have the tumour removed. "Radiotherapy was one of the options, but with the size of the



RACE



tumour and my age and so on, I was advised that getting it out completely would be better. Radiotherapy could have made it grow before it stopped, grow and not stop, or even turn cancerous. We decided the best option was to just get it taken out."

The keeper, who has been with the Reds since 2011, says the support of her team-mates and the club's staff have helped her through a difficult time. "I was obviously scared the whole time pre-op because it is a big thing, but just being in the football environment helps more than you can ever imagine. Being around people who were supporting me was helping my fitness and going into the surgery fit was very important.

"I've had support from all over the world because of Liverpool's profile and that has given me a goal to focus on. All those factors have just been immense in helping me get my head around it all. At the minute I feel really happy and I didn't really expect to. I'm genuinely putting it down to the people I've got around me and to football. The club has been amazing. It might sound a bit cringey but I'm so glad that I'm not just part of any club but that I'm part of this club."

"I'm so glad to be part of this football club with its people around me"

Danielle has been back in and around the club's Widnes training base since late July and now has a target to be involved with the squad again at the back-end of this year. "The physio and the sports scientists have given me a plan, but it all depends on how my body reacts because right now if I do something one day, I'm usually really tired the next. But they are hoping that I might be back for the end of October/November. If we can get through the first round of the Champions League, I may be available again for the next round and there's no bigger carrot-dangler than that!"

Danielle is also set to have a new-look when she finally pulls on her boots for action again. "Considering what has happened I will probably wear a Petr Cech-type skull cap when I come back, but that is more for my parents' peace of mind than mine.



Title winner with team-mates last season

"I wouldn't think: oh, I can't go in for that ball because they might kick me. I'm definitely going to be throwing myself around again – there's no doubt about that."

Now Danielle is hoping to support other people who are diagnosed with acoustic neuromas and is hoping the Reds' worldwide fan-base can help raise awareness about the condition.

"When I was first told about it, I tried to Google it and find people in sport that had been through it, but I couldn't find anyone. I discovered a charity called the British Acoustic Neuroma Association and I've been working with them to try and promote awareness using football. Through my contacts with the game I've got more ability to raise awareness than most people who have it.

"Last month I met a woman who is having the same surgery in October but didn't have anyone to talk to. One of my nurses put her in touch with me as someone who has been through it. I am trying to help as many people as I can and I've also had quite a few messages on Twitter from people who have had it done or are thinking of having it done and are considering the choice between surgery and radiotherapy. It's really rewarding to know that I can help other people, as I never had that, but then again I had football and everyone at Liverpool Ladies to help me.

"It feels like a weight lifted because for two-and-a-half years I've known I had the tumour and then from the start of the season I've known that I've had my surgery coming up – it's just that no-one else knew until after I'd had it. Now I feel that there's nothing to stop me."

■ For more information or to support the British Acoustic Neuroma Association's fundraising efforts, visit www.bana-uk.com.

Words: William Hughes



Keeper Danielle in typical action

The ENTER







Growing up in Brazil. The strange new world of Europe. Coming to Anfield. The dream of winning trophies with Liverpool FC.
Roberto Firmino reveals all



His first start at Arsenal's Emirates

Boy from Brazil

Maceio is a wonderful city by the sea in the northeast part of Brazil. Like a lot of cities it has some good and bad areas but it is my home and I would recommend people visit there. I have happy memories of the place, even though my childhood wasn't always easy. In fact it was very difficult at times. I come from a humble background. My dad worked selling water and soft drinks out on the street. So it wasn't easy for us, we didn't have a lot of money. Sometimes I didn't have enough [money] to get the bus to the training ground but I always managed to find a way around that. Although we didn't have a lot we never starved, there was always food to eat. When life is like that, it's easy for kids to get in trouble but I always tried to run away from trouble. I would go and play football instead.

Born to play

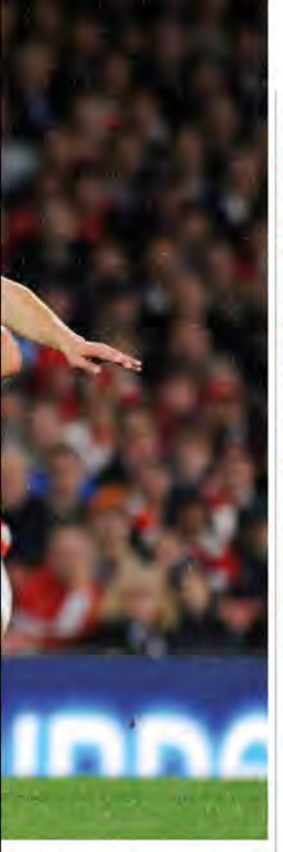
Football seemed to come naturally to me, as far as I can remember it wasn't difficult at all. I found that I could play well from a young age. And almost immediately my sole objective as a boy was to play the game professionally. I was with a few amateur teams and they really helped me to develop my skills before I moved to my first professional club, CRB [Clube de Regatas Brasil]. All I wanted to do was become a footballer and I think it's worked out okay for me so far.

Leaving home at 16

I didn't have a contract at CRB and hadn't yet played for their first team. Then the opportunity to go on trial at Figueirense came along. It's in southern Brazil, quite far away from Maceio – maybe four or five hours on a plane, probably the equivalent of going from one side of Europe to the other.



Listening to the boss





I had to keep the trial secret from CRB as I didn't want them to get upset. Thankfully it went well and Figueirense wanted to sign me. Moving there was a huge change for me; everything was different from the colder weather to the culture. It was intimidating initially. My parents weren't with me for the first year and I really missed them at family times like Christmas or Easter. But when someone wants something really badly they learn how to live with it. I dealt with everything because I had to.

Tattoo talk

As you can see, I have quite a few tattoos. There's a crown on the right side of my neck and and the word 'God' in Portuguese. My right arm and hand have tattoos dedicated to my family and my love for them, including my sister Roberta who is 14. I've got some important dates of birth tattooed on my hand and a large rose too. Then my left arm has more [tattoos] which relate to my creativity. I've not finished getting tattoos on that arm yet and will hopefully add some more in the future.

"Moving away from Brazil was a huge change but you learn to adapt"

Moving to Europe

I was 19 when Hoffenheim came to Brazil to sign me. Figueirense had been in my country's second division when I was there, so again it was a big transition for me. This time I was going even further away and the language was completely new to me. I remember arriving in Germany and it was minus 10 degrees and snowing. That was a huge shock. Again, my parents were not with me initially. A lot of players need a year to adapt, it took me a little less time. I was in the team after five or six months. It was a great place for me to play football, a small town near Frankfurt, and they'd had some Brazilian players before me.

The thick of it

Towards the end of the 2012/13 season we were in the relegation play-off against Kaiserslautern. Being in such a position is obviously not nice but I have fond memories of the ties. It was over two legs and in the first game I scored twice to help us win. We also won the second leg to stay up. It was a big moment for me. Those important goals gave me a lot of confidence and brought me more attention.

Right foot forward

A lot of Brazilians are very superstitious, especially footballers. I'm the same. I always step on to the pitch with my right foot first. It's quite curious that back home – even if you are left-footed – it is considered lucky to enter the pitch with your right foot. I don't know why that is the case. I have other mandatory superstitions before a game too. I pray and listen to music on the way to the stadium. I also bless myself just before kick-off.

Bundesliga basics

I had a lot of experiences with Hoffenheim and have learned so much from them. Each season I worked hard and was able to get better – I think that has shown in my goals-and-assists stats and in the fact that defenders began to man-mark me. I had to deal with that. It wasn't a problem as you





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"Being in Germany helped me to mature and I can continue to grow here"

know at the highest level you will come up against good defenders who are out to stop you. Being in Germany helped me to mature and hopefully I can continue to grow and improve here at Liverpool without any major hiccups.

Premier League dream

It's strange but I remember just before I moved to Hoffenheim that I had a dream about playing in England. At the time that wasn't an option, the opportunity wasn't there for me. Then it came along a few months ago and I quickly decided it was the right offer for me. As a footballer I always want more. I really enjoyed my time in Germany but didn't actually win anything. So the next step was to join a club that can compete for trophies, that's why I came here. I want to fight for titles and play in the Champions League. So moving here really is a dream come true.

Early impressions

I think if I had come to the Premier League directly from Brazil it would have been a massive change for me. But being in Germany for a period beforehand means it isn't such a huge difference. From the Premier League games I've been involved in so far I would say English football is faster but the Bundesliga is a little more technical.





"A dream for the strikers"

"For Liverpool to have Coutinho and Firmino is a big achievement for them. It is going to give them one of the most exciting midfields in Europe. The creativity, intelligence and goals they have between them can change Liverpool as a team. It is a big sign of intent. To have a midfield with those two gives them a big chance to qualify for the Champions League next season. It is a dream for the Liverpool strikers to have that sort of service. If you can't score goals in a team with Coutinho and Firmino in midfield then you wont score goals in any team. They will create so many chances."
Ronaldinho

"I watched him training with Figueirense and it was strange because during some exercises he would just, without any apparent reason, just fold… But instead of making a big meal out of it and getting angry, he listened carefully to his coach and learned from what he had done wrong. That impressed me."
Hoffenheim sporting director Ernst Tanner

"He is unbelievably good tactically."
Holger Stanislawski, his first manager at Hoffenheim

"He's a guy that helps himself because he trains to the maximum every single day and he's coming along very, very well. As well as that, he's a good guy as well and every aspect of life here in Liverpool, he's thrown himself into – both football and language. He is working very, very hard."
Brendan Rodgers

Interview: John Hynes





Head boys

Simple man, supreme manager… On the 70th anniversary of Bob Paisley's playing debut for Liverpool, and four decades since he managed the Reds to a League and UEFA Cup double, we're celebrating the life and times of an LFC legend. This fantastic photograph from the archives shows a training session at Melwood back in August 1956 – the old place has changed a bit since then, as our feature on page 84 reveals. Here Bob feeds the great Billy Liddell a header as (from left to right) team-mates Geoff Twentyman, John Evans, Tommy Younger (goalkeeper) and Laurie Hughes look on.

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Neil Mellor

This season's squad must cope with the demands of the Europa League

Liverpool began their Premier League campaign with three clean-sheets and I believe the two new full-backs have played a big part in the team's defensive improvement.

Both Nathaniel Clyne and Joe Gomez want to defend. They provide a threat going forward, but primarily they know how to play narrow alongside the two centre-halves in a settled back-four. That has made a big difference.

Nobody should underestimate how difficult it has been for Gomez to go from playing at centre-half in the Championship to left-back in the Premier League at just 18 years of age. He's stepped into one of the most competitive leagues in world football, after a relatively short time in the game, and shown that physically he can handle playing against established senior players.

Gomez had never played at left-back before and has dealt with doing so particularly well. He'll also have discovered that the speed, strength and power of opponents in the Premier League is at a different level to what he faced in the Championship, so it is to his credit that he has started his Liverpool career so well.

Clyne has also impressed. Right-back was a problem position for Liverpool last season, but that has been addressed. It is unfortunate that Jon Flanagan has been sidelined with a serious injury as perhaps he would have made the position his own, but for me Clyne is the best English right-back in the Premier League.

Not only does he have pace, he also has awareness. He doesn't switch off, something that some full-backs with pace tend to do. He has settled in so well that he's almost gone under the radar a little, but he has been consistently good – something you want to see from a new signing.

"Travelling back from games in Europe can be the biggest issue"



The Reds now have strength in depth

A few of the other players brought in this summer have yet to make their debuts and I can see the Europa League being an important competition for our fringe players. It's an opportunity for them to stake a claim for a regular place in Premier League games and I'd also expect a number of Under-21 players to feature in the competition. For those lads it could be the difference between having a future at Liverpool or not.

I know from covering U21 games for LFCTV that Joao Teixeira is a player a lot of fans would like to see given an opportunity. Teixeira is a talented player but faces the unenviable problem of having to compete for a place with Coutinho, Firmino and Lallana. He did very well on loan at Brighton last season before getting injured and his attitude impresses me. There are some players who, having trained with the first team at Melwood and been on loan in the Championship, wouldn't take kindly to dropping down to play at U21 level, but Teixeira has responded to it well.

How Liverpool adjust to playing Thursday-Sunday when the Europa League kicks off will also be important. Regular Sunday games can create a mentality that you always feel like you're playing catch-up, but that isn't the biggest problem of being in the Europa. The travelling is.

Playing a League Cup game on a Wednesday before a Saturday Premier League match is one thing. Playing on a Sunday afternoon having travelled back from deepest, darkest Macedonia in the early hours of a Friday morning is another. That sort of travelling is exhausting – it can affect your sleep in the days after you return – and is an element that makes being in the Europa League potentially damaging to your domestic aspirations.

Overcoming such issues by utilising his squad is something I'm sure Brendan Rodgers will have on his mind when he analyses the draw.

Follow Neil on Twitter @NeilMellor33





LFC in the community plus official merchandise and a club media update

Melwood has changed out of all recognition since newly appointed manager **Bill Shankly** took one look and demanded a complete upgrade. In fact Bill lived nearer to Everton FC's training ground than Melwood – what was the **name of his road**? You'll find the answer on p91.

Changing rooms

From pre-Shanks to present-day, how Liverpool FC's training base has evolved over the decades

Liverpool FC first acquired the 13-acre site we now know as Melwood in 1950. Prior to the football club purchasing the land it had been the property of St Francis Xavier school, or SFX for short, and it was that link which provided the name for the L12 location.

Two members of staff at the school, Father Melling and Father Woodlock, had spent hours out on the field teaching the students how to play football. To honour the duo the first syllable of their surnames were joined together to create 'Melwood'.

For all that, having a specific training ground was still a novelty six decades ago, and the players usually trained in the strip of land that became the Main Stand car-park at Anfield instead.

This underuse meant Melwood wasn't in good condition during its early years. Sam Roach was appointed groundsman there in 1953 and later recalled: "The place was like a jungle when I first came here. The manager then was Don Welsh, who just made do with the facilities. The changing rooms were in an old, green wooden pavillion which used to get really cold."

When Bill Shankly was appointed manager in December 1959 he was far from impressed by what he found on the site, which was a short stroll from his home in West Derby. "It was a sorry wilderness," he later pointed out in his autobiography. "One pitch looked as if a couple of bombs had been dropped on it. 'The Germans were over here, were they?' I asked.

"Tom Bush, the old Liverpool centre-half, took my wife Ness and me round to look at houses for the players and we called to see the training ground at Melwood. It was just a wilderness but I said to Ness: 'Well, it's big and it can be developed. At least there is space here'."


Melwood
Training Facility

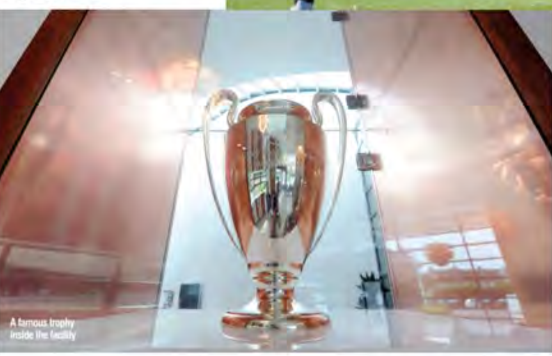

A pre-season jog round Melwood in July 1963

Shankly immediately set about rectifying the situation and detailed the Anfield ground staff to improve the training pitches that he said contained "trees, hills, hollows and grass long enough for Jimmy Melia to hide in standing up."

"Bill changed everything," Roach pointed out. "He added a gym in 1961 and Reuben Bennett used to take all the kids in there for a warm-up

"It was a wilderness but I said to Nessie at least there was space"


The boss on today's green baize of a training pitch


A famous trophy inside the facility

before training started." Shankly also introduced target boards to improve the accuracy of the players' passing and shooting, and had an all-weather pitch installed while a much-improved pavilion was constructed in 1968.

These facilities, along with his ideas of always working with the ball and regularly playing five-a-sides, clearly had a huge impact on the club's fortunes. "We never bothered with sand dunes and hills and roads," he explained. "We trained on grass where football is played."

When their work was done the squad would be bused back to Anfield to wash and change. "This allowed half-an-hour for the players to cool down and avoid strain," Ronnie Moran, a Liverpool player from 1952 until 1965 before he joined the coaching

An aerial view from the 1990s



The words that say it all

Melwood remained largely unchanged until the early 1990s

staff, pointed out. "What Bill set down changed very little under managers like Paisley and Fagan. But why change a winning formula?"

Like that formula, the Melwood facility remained largely unchanged until the arrival of Graeme Souness as manager in 1991. The Scot's time playing in Italy with Sampdoria meant he had absorbed new ideas about how teams should prepare for games at their training base. "Graeme wanted top-class facilities and brought in many continental methods," explained Moran, still a member of the backroom staff at that point. "We had baths put into the old cricket pavilion so



Striker Fernando Torres training indoors in 2010

The training base has evolved just as the modern game has changed

everyone would change there after training. Eventually we began [the day] at Melwood too, so there was a dining and lounge area put in."

Modernisation continued under Souness' successor Roy Evans and went a step further again when Gerard Houllier instigated a major renovation project at the turn of the century. The French manager was involved in the design of what was dubbed 'the Millennium Pavilion'. "There will be new changing areas, a gymnasium, swimming pools, saunas, a hydrotherapy pool and rehabilitation rooms," he announced when the spectacular plans were revealed. "It will be more in tune with what a club of this standard wants to achieve."

A large press room which doubles as a space for team meetings and an indoor astroturf pitch are also part of the world-class set up which ensure that boss Brendan Rodgers' squad is in the perfect shape for every demanding season.

Just recently, as our images show, further improvements have been made to ensure that as the game continues to change and evolve, Liverpool FC's training base does exactly the same.



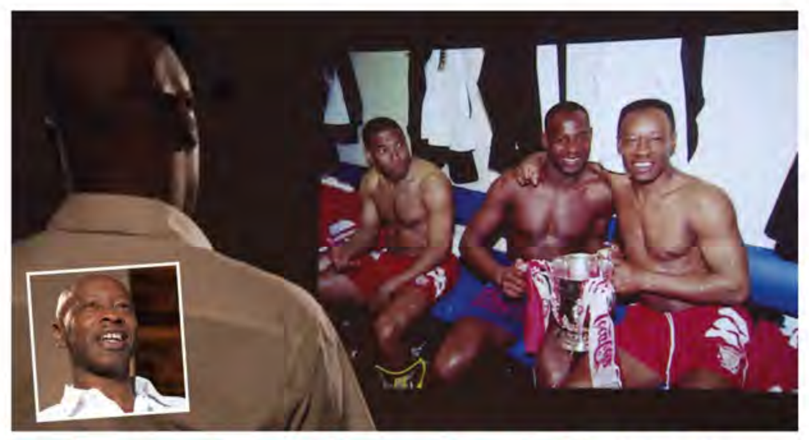
Melwood's main building in 1956



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LFCTV 15/16

The club's official TV channel is serving up awesome new shows this season

In the Frame is the name of the must-see new feature on LFCTV's weekly magazine show #LFCWORLD. Following Ray Clemence's emotional journey on the show, it's the turn of winger Mark Walters to re-live his greatest moments through pictures – and look out for more Liverpool FC legends to come over the netx few weeks.

Also new to LFCTV this season is the Premier League Preview Show – the essential start to the weekend's action. For 2015/16 the show will include live coverage of the manager's press conference, plus expert opinion and analysis from our pool of legendary pundits, while the view from the opposition comes from a former player and provides invaluable insight ahead of the upcoming fixture. The show is live from 1.45pm on Thursdays or Fridays (depending on the press-conference day) and is repeated every Friday at 7.30pm.

And remember you can watch every kick of every game on LFCTV and LFCTV GO!

LFCTV is available on Sky channel 429 and Virgin Media channel 544. For LFCTV in the UK and Ireland, visit **www.liverpoolfc.com/lfctv.**



LFCTV's new Premier League Preview Show

QUIZ ANSWERS: LIVERPOOL p5: Shanks signed Clemence for Liverpool FC in 1967 from Scunthorpe United... FOOTBALL p27: The no9 shirt was worn by Rickie Lambert, Iago Aspas and Andy Carroll... CLUB p83: Bill lived on Bellefield Avenue next to EFC's training ground

LOVE AT FIRST SITE

There are exciting changes to the club's official website this season, and it's fully optimised for the latest mobile and tablet devices. Website editor James Carroll says: "The new-look liverpoolfc.com home and news pages are the result of a lot of hard work from many club departments including our Technology and Transformation and Digital Media teams. It allows fans a much smoother user experience, particularly when accessing the site on mobiles or tablets.We're really pleased with it and the feedback we've had so far has been brilliant. It's important to remember that this is only phase one – there'll be many more improvements made to the website in the near future."



SOCCER CAMP SURPRISE

Reds stars Danny and Simon take part in skills and drills with delighted local youngsters


Simon with three young stars

There was a treat in store for youngsters at Anfield Sports & Community Centre recently when Reds players Simon Mignolet and Danny Ings took part in their Liverpool FC Foundation Summer Soccer Camp.

The pair took part in a skills and drills warm-up session then a Q&A session. Danny and Simon were also on hand to present the participants with LFC goodies as well as signing autographs and posing for pictures. Ings said: "It was great to see the youngsters enjoying their football and getting active during their summer break. I really enjoyed taking part in some of their activities and sharing my passion for football with them.

"It's a real pleasure for both myself and Simon and it highlights the fantastic work being done by Liverpool FC Foundation."

Anfield Sports and Community Centre is one of the LFC Foundation's main hub sites where an assortment of community programmes are delivered with the aim of engaging local youngsters in physical activity and discouraging anti-social behaviour. Andrea Cooper, head of Liverpool FC Foundation, added: "We are proud of the high-quality camps we deliver throughout the year to youngsters across the city. It's important for us to continue our engagement throughout school holidays as well as term-time.

"I'm glad that all the participants enjoyed Danny and Simon's appearance and I hope it will provide them with even more inspiration to continue playing football."

Joburg joy as South African team wins in LFC kit

Liverpool FC Foundation were delighted to donate a number of football kits to Refilwe, a community development initiative based in Johannesburg.

Refilwe's mission is to help children and adults to become sustainable – spiritually, mentally and physically – and to break the cycle of poverty in all these areas so that they can develop into contributing members of their community and society. Founded in 1991 initially as a healthcare clinic, it has since developed a strong focus on childcare and skills upliftment through education and mentorship.

Refilwe is next to an informal settlement called Joe Slovo from where it employs people and provides aftercare and holiday tutoring programs for children who attend a kids club every Saturday. Football teams from both Refilwe and Joe Slovo combine to train weekly and take part in a local Sunday league, and the kit that Liverpool FC Foundation has provided replaces one that is old and mostly lost.



The Reds kit and its proud new wearers

A group of sixth-formers from Calday Grange Grammar School on the Wirral has visited Refilwe every year for a decade, with an annual football match taking place. This year, the Refilwe/Joe Slovo team had no idea the school was bringing them a new kit, and they were incredibly excited and grateful to receive it. After five consecutive wins for Calday, in 2015 it was Refilwe/Joe Slovo FC who won – wearing their new kit.

Kit Aid, Oxfam, Whizz Kids United, Standard Chartered charities, Friends of the Malawi Orphans and organisations on Merseyside have also been beneficiaries of similar donations in the past.

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KING'S RANSOM

European Cup winner's shirt, 1981

For the victory against Real Madrid in Paris, the Reds unveiled new-look 'Airtex' fabric shirts. It did them no harm as Alan Kennedy's goal secured Big Ears no3. Kenny was never too fussed about the kit – as long as he was on the pitch wearing it! "The simpler you keep it, the better for me. There weren't any horrendous kits during my career. In those days as long as you were wearing a Liverpool shirt with a number below 12, you were happy because you knew you were playing."





Among the glittering exhibits housed at the club museum are some of the medals won by the one and only Kenny Dalglish



European Cup winner's medal, 1984

Kenny of course scored the Wembley winner against Bruges in 1978. His medal from that match, plus the ones from 1981 (v Real Madrid in Paris) and 1984 (v Roma in the Italian capital, pictured here) are all on display in The Liverpool FC Story, the club's new interactive museum.

In his book *Kenny Dalglish: My Life* he writes: "There were two things that made it very attractive to come to Liverpool. One was to win domestic trophies, but the big prize was to have a chance to collect European trophies. We got to the semi-final of the European Cup a couple of times when I was with Celtic, but to come down to Liverpool in my first season and walk away with the European Cup was unbelievable. I could not have picked a better club with a better pedigree to come and try to achieve that aim of winning European trophies."

FA Cup winner's medal, 1986

As every Reds supporter knows, Kenny capped his first season as player-manager of Liverpool by steering the club to their first-ever League and FA Cup double. He recalls: "In 1986 we never actually got to celebrate on the coach journey home from Chelsea after winning the league at Stamford Bridge because Alan Hansen, Steve Nicol and myself were going to Glasgow [to play an international match for Scotland]. But we had an opportunity the week following when we were back at Wembley Stadium to play Everton in the first all-Merseyside FA Cup final. After pipping Everton for the league, they were up for it, so we had to match their effort and commitment in the first half when we were 1-0 down. In the second half we played more like we had played for the latter part of the 1985/86 season and we ended up winning 3-1, so the title-clinching celebrations we missed out on the week before were made up for on the Saturday night."





Dubai Super Cup winner's medal, 1986

The league and FA Cup were not the only medals Kenny won during 1986. In December that year, the Reds headed to the United Arab Emirates to contest a prestigious fixture against his former club Celtic. A late goal from Alan Hansen took the game to a penalty shoot-out which saw Liverpool win 4-2 as Bruce Grobbelaar saved one and saw another hit the post.



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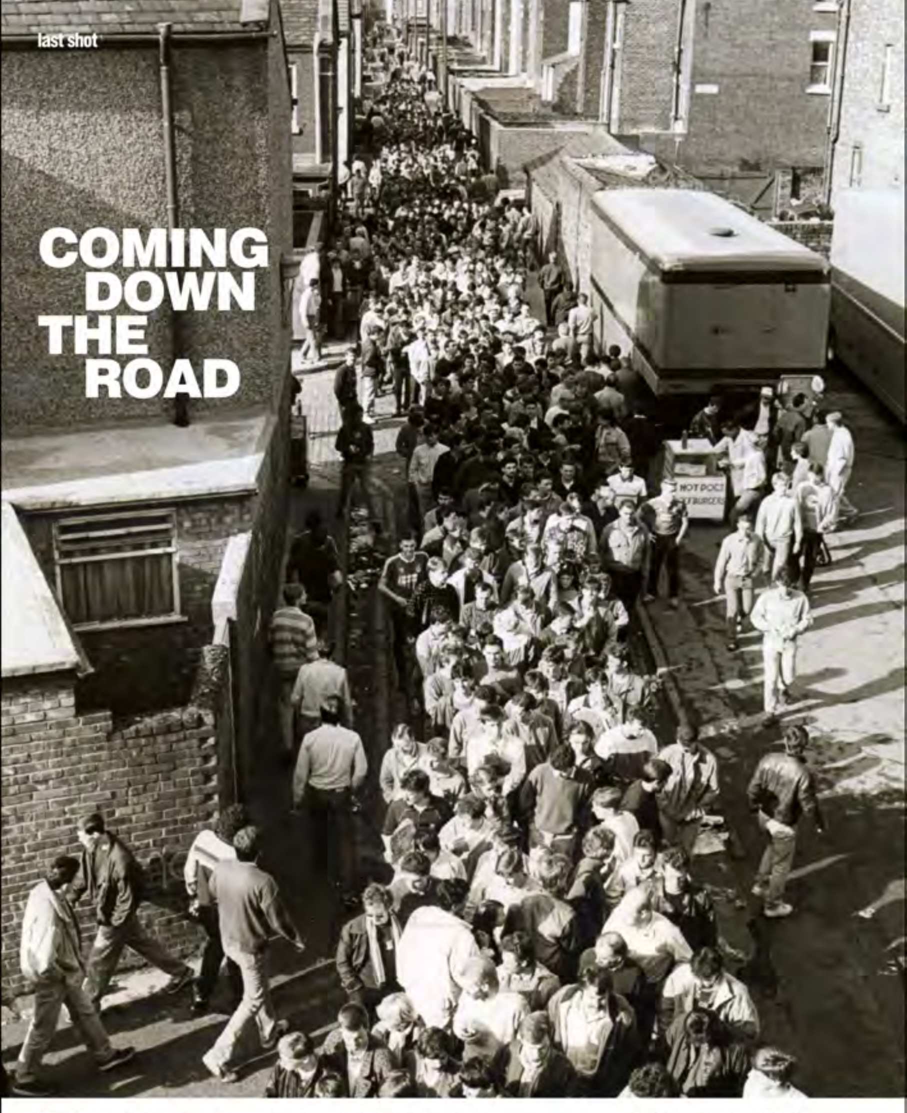
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COMING DOWN THE ROAD



Twenty-eight years ago they were queueing not just round the block but way, way down the road to watch Liverpool FC at Anfield. This photo from Saturday 17 October 1987 captures a seemingly endless stream of fans along the length of Back Rockfield Road, queuing to get into the pay-on-the-gate Spion Kop. The occasion: Liverpool's home game against high-flying QPR, and another chance to see the stupendous talents of new signings John Barnes and Peter Beardsley in player-manager Kenny Dalglish's thrilling team. Back Rockfield Road ran between, and more-or-less parallel to, Walton Breck Road and Anfield Road. It's now been swept away as part of the redevelopment of the stadium's Main Stand and surrounding area.